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THE FORTNIGHTLY

MARCH, 1949

THE ECONOMICS OF 1952

BY R. P. SCHWARZ

THE essential findings of the *Interim Report on the European Recovery Programme** can be summed up in two sentences : the Marshall plan countries will still have to face a considerable balance of payments deficit when American aid comes to an end, by the middle of 1952 ; that deficit, even on favourable assumptions, will still be equivalent to some £750 million.

On the road to economic reconstruction, the Report stands like a two-faced danger signal. On one side it reads " stop fooling yourselves " : for those who still believed, until quite recently, that the Marshall plan countries could become self-supporting, or very nearly so, within just over three years from now. On the other side it reads " stop fooling others " : for those—the official world included—who knew the facts, yet went on pretending. That second group of people is less to be excused than the first. For the facts have been public property for a long time. Indeed, for the most part, they were known already at the time when the O.E.E.C. was set up, in the summer of 1947. Nor did the failure of the American loan to Britain and the break-down of the Bretton Woods agreements justify excessive optimism.

(I)

In an article in THE FORTNIGHTLY of April 1947(†), it was contended that the Marshall plan, like the American loan to Britain, was " sold " to the Americans under all sorts of false pretences. But it has also been " bought " by Europe under false pretences. In accepting the plan, the " participating countries " did not sufficiently stress the fact, already then evident, that all efforts they could make to right *their* balance of payments would be of no avail unless the United States took complementary steps to right its own. For the two are merely the obverse and the reverse of the same problem. When the very principle of Marshall aid was still in doubt, it might have been undiplomatic to stress the further sacrifices, over and above this aid, which the United States would still have to grant in the future. Yet, less than a year has passed since Congress enacted the European Recovery Programme and already events compel the

* This Report by the Organization for European Economic Co-operation is dated Paris, December 30, 1948.

†*The Meaning of the Marshall Plan*, by R. P. Schwarz.

participating countries to abandon their reticence. Truth cannot be administered in homoeopathic doses. Hence the admission that the balance of payments problem—the chief problem in present-day world economy—cannot be solved by the middle of 1952 ; that, in fact, it cannot be solved at all as long as it is treated mainly as a European problem. That is precisely what the Marshall plan does and that is also its greatest defect. To-day, the problem is America's very own and until that is recognized, there can be no hope of a solution.

Some will object that the United States' generous financial aid is hardly consistent with such a view. Does it not show that it treated the problem as very much its own ? Such an objection confuses the issues. That its help has been generous is not in doubt. Nor can it be questioned that it has been invaluable. Without Marshall aid the situation in Western Europe would to-day be catastrophic. But the fact remains that, in its present shape, this aid is inadequate—not so much in its amount, but in its method. On any long-term view, it must therefore remain ineffective. It has reduced the gap in the European balances of payments and, by 1952, it will probably have reduced it further. But it cannot be closed until the United States tackles its own side of the balance of payments problem. It has paid others generously to do just that on their side, a very different matter.

(II)

What can be done, without painful and costly alterations in the very structure of American economy, has been or will be done by the participating countries with the aid of American grants and loan. Negatively, Europe's contribution to that end consists in a reduction of her imports from the dollar zone, by strict economy in purchases and the development of alternative sources of supply ; positively, it consists in a vigorous drive towards greater exports to the dollar zone. But these two complementary moves have limits which cannot be exceeded. Imports cannot be compressed below a minimum without imperilling essential living standards and thereby raising the danger of political upheaval. And exports cannot be pushed beyond a certain maximum, with the structure of American economy being what it is. In the present case, these two orthodox methods of removing a balance of payments deficit are clearly insufficient since they will still leave a gap of 750 million £. To blame the American private investor for not risking his money abroad would be both futile and unfair. But if we cautiously exclude—as we should —both American government aid after 1952 and American private investment, there is only one other means left for closing the gap : a vast increase in American imports.

The magnitude of the problem can best be gauged from an examina-

tion of the following figures :

United States Balance of Payments (current transactions) in million dollars*

	1919-1939 incl.	1938	1945	1946	1947
Net trade surplus (excess of exports over imports)	+ 18,568	+ 928	+ 5088	+ 6876	+ 9975
" Services " account : net surplus (+) or deficit (—)	— 13,403	— 345	+ 834	+ 819	+ 501
Net surplus of investment income	+ 9,288	+ 384	+ 336	+ 438	+ 800
Total surplus on current account	+ 14,453	+ 967	+ 4590	+ 8133	+11,276

Over the 29 years covered by this table, the purchasing power of the dollar has fluctuated widely. No precise comparisons can thus be made between the various figures. But a rough comparison at least is possible with the figures for 1938, the last " normal " pre-war year. It suggests that at stable price levels, the United States' surplus on current account—which is tantamount to the deficit incurred by the rest of the world—had, in 1947, grown to something like four times its pre-war size. The trade surplus in particular, which is the largest single constituent element of the total surplus, had multiplied over three times.

No less important than the size of this surplus is its composition by geographical areas. The *Survey of the Economic Situation and Prospects of Europe* published by the Economic Commission for Europe in the spring of 1948 contains such an analysis by main trading zones. It shows strikingly to what extent the position of America's debtors has deteriorated since pre-war days. In 1947 the U.S.A. had a huge surplus not only with all European countries, but also with the " overseas currency areas affiliated to Europe " (mainly the dominions and colonies of European countries) and with all " other overseas countries " combined (the Latin American countries, Canada, China, Japan, the Philippines, Siam and Iran). In 1947 also, the " overseas currency areas affiliated to Europe " which a year earlier had still shown a very small trading surplus with the United States (two million dollars) had a deficit of 1,000 million dollars. Between 1946 and 1947, the deficit of the " other overseas countries " had more than doubled, from 1,552 to 3,460 million dollars.

The Survey could have pushed the analysis further had it shown which countries or territories in the world obtained an export surplus

* that is, excluding the movements of : short-term capital and gold ; long-term capital ; and, in 1945-1947, " unilateral transfers " (gifts) by which the surplus was in actual fact offset in a more or less precarious fashion. During the period 1940-1944, the U.S. balance of payments showed a deficit, as the enormous lend-lease exports, etc., called for no financial settlement. The deficit for the period amounted to 1253 million dollars (Trade : + 801 ; services — 3,789 ; investment income + 1,735). With the end of lend-lease, in 1945, this deficit disappeared immediately.

in their transactions with the United States and what was the amount of that surplus. For 1947, one finds that it totalled a mere 320.5 million dollars (which compares with a total U.S. export surplus of 9,975 million dollars). This small surplus was shared between 20 comparatively minor countries and territories, all of them suppliers of raw materials and primary products, and the three largest shares of the total went to British Malaya, the Gold Coast and Cuba, with 218. 41 and 17.8 million dollars respectively*. Not one industrial country is to be found among the whole number.

Before 1939, a considerable part (72 per cent. for the whole period 1919-1939) of the United States trading surplus was offset by a large deficit which the United States incurred on account of " services " (that is, transactions such as shipping, insurance and banking services ; immigrants' remittances and the expenditure of American tourists abroad). The flow of dollars from that source dried up during and after the 1939-1945 war. Some of this income is now gradually and painfully being recovered by its former beneficiaries, but part of the loss is likely to remain permanent. Meanwhile, in 1946 and in 1947, even " services " earned the United States a considerable surplus.

The U.S. investment account has been positive ever since 1919. Its net surplus represents the excess of the proceeds of American investment abroad over the proceeds of foreign investment in the United States. With the large-scale liquidation of dollar assets held outside the United States in the course of the period 1939-1945 and since, this net surplus further increased. It now runs at a figure about double the annual average for the inter-war period. As the industrial countries of Western Europe had been the chief holders of these (and other) foreign investments, this loss of their "private means " was the *coup de grâce* in a situation already sufficiently difficult in many other ways. For in pre-war days the proceeds of these investments contributed an important sum—some 350 million £—to the payment of their total trade deficits amounting to some 525 million £. Yet, in some cases at least, the position had become dangerous even before the outbreak of the late war. For Britain and France, there is direct evidence of a deficit in their balances of payments during various years of the pre-war period. Thus, on current account, Britain showed a slight deficit in each of the years 1931 to 1938, with the exception of 1933 (when the balance broke even) and of 1935 (when there was a surplus of 32 million £). The French

* The list of the 20 countries and territories is as follows :—Western hemisphere : Greenland, Cuba, Guatemala, Curaçao, Suriname. Asia : Arabian peninsula States " not elsewhere specified", Siam, British Malaya, Korea. Africa : Gold Coast, Nigeria, Liberia, Madeira, Angola, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Italian East Africa, Brit. Somaliland, Madagascar, Seychelles. Pacific : Japanese mandated islands. See Summary of foreign commerce of the U.S., January-December, 1947. U.S. Dept. of Commerce.

balance seems to have been constantly in deficit from 1931 to 1938, with the exception of 1934. Of the remaining three important creditor countries, the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland, only the first provided statistics of its international transactions. They show a deficit throughout the years 1929 to 1935, but a surplus during 1936, 1937 and 1938. Of Belgium, it may be guessed that its balance was positive in some years and negative in others, while Switzerland's is likely to have been strongly positive. In its survey already mentioned above, the Economic Commission for Europe estimated that in 1938 Europe, taken as a whole, balanced her accounts : the surplus she secured from " other non-European countries " being equal to her deficit *vis-à-vis* the United States. Such a view is, however, almost certainly too optimistic. In the first place, balance of payments statistics were notoriously poor—their improvement dates from after the war—and their margin of error must be set variously at between 10 per cent. to 20 per cent. Paradoxical though it may seem, a real balance would appear far more likely if the pre-war statistics had shown a deficit within the range of these margins of error. But even supposing there was such a balance, how was it obtained ? League of Nations statistics show that in 1938, exchange control was in force in no fewer than 33 countries : 12 in Central and South America, two in Asia, two in the Far East, 15 in (mainly Eastern and South-Eastern) Europe ; to which must be added New Zealand and Iceland*. Thus, if there was a balance, it must have been most precarious. Such as it was, it hinged on one factor alone : the convertibility of at least the main currencies of the world, for which it was still possible to secure gold or dollars in a few markets of which London was the most important. To-day, none of these currencies, with the exception of the dollar and the Swiss franc, is freely convertible. Therefore, a surplus earned in a soft (inconvertible) currency cannot compensate a deficit incurred in a hard (convertible) currency. Yet before the war, Europe offset her deficit *vis-à-vis* the United States by dollars obtained, directly or indirectly, from her transactions with Latin America and other non-European countries. But at present these countries have themselves a considerable dollar deficit and their currencies, for that reason and others, have ceased to be convertible.

(IV)

Thus, the old fabric of multilateral trade, moth-eaten already in 1938, is in tatters to-day. The system of round-about compensation of debits and credits has ceased to work, at least in so far—and

*Among the (then) creditor countries France only barely escaped the application of exchange control during the period September 1936 to November 1938. The heavy depreciation of the franc during those two years, by reducing the volume of imports, may be held to have had the same effect as would have had exchange control.

that is essential—as the deficit is *vis-à-vis* the dollar zone. For, of dollars, all countries are short.

This dollar shortage, as is now admitted, will still exist in 1952, even though it may by then be less acute. It might be further reduced if the E.R.P. countries succeeded in dovetailing their various four-year programmes and making them as nearly complementary to each other as is conceivable. Such an effort is imperative, for every dollar counts. But even the most perfect adjustment of the individual four-year plans is unlikely to produce a saving of more than a few hundred million dollars before the time-limit is up. By a superhuman effort one or two of the E.R.P. countries might hope to square their own balance of payments. Yet, the odds, even in Britain's case—at present the most promising—are against it. The speed of the convoy is that of its slowest ship, and even if one or two countries succeeded in achieving balance, the result would merely be a " redistribution of the deficit " among the other E.R.P. countries. Of that kind of co-operation, Monsieur Paul Reynaud recently said : " One has the impression that the nineteen are drowning and to save themselves, each clings to his neighbour's shoulders, no matter whether he drags him down."

(V)

When the Committee for European Economic Co-operation, predecessor of the O.E.E.C., published its *General Report* in the autumn of 1947, it estimated that the Marshall countries would, in 1948, incur a deficit with the outside world of about 8,250 million dollars out of which total the deficit with the American continent alone would represent 8,000 million dollars*.

The combined programmes of the Marshall plan countries for 1952-1953 would, if unchanged, leave a deficit with the whole outside world of about 800 million dollars ; the deficit with the dollar area† alone would be just under 1,500 million dollars. (The difference of 700 million is assumed to be covered by a surplus from the non-participating sterling countries—an assumption that implies that this surplus can be converted into dollars). Unfortunately, the analysis of these programmes by the O.E.E.C. shows clearly that these figures are far too optimistic. Instead of an 800-million dollar deficit with the " outside world ", the O.E.E.C. expects one of 3,000 million. If the deficit with the dollar area alone had to be revised in approximately the same proportion, the figure would then be in the neighbourhood of 5,500 million dollars. And for the whole " outside world ", the deficit could only be reduced to the expected 3,000 million dollars on the assumption of a surplus, equal to the

*The deficit with the U.S. alone was estimated at 5,640 million dollars.

†The " dollar area " is not fully identical with the " American continent " referred to above, but very nearly so.

difference (and, again, convertible into dollars), secured from other countries.

Such a proportionate upward revision of the dollar deficit would probably, in turn, sin by excessive pessimism. But whatever the final figure, it is likely to exceed the sums that could possibly be obtained by means of private loans and credits, the fact apart that, on any long term view, such a solution is not desirable. The piling-up of a new American debt by the various European countries can only lead to fresh difficulties so long as fundamental equilibrium has not been restored in the whole balance of payments position.

It is clear, therefore, that the Marshall plan countries will have to intensify their exports to the dollar zone. But it will not be enough for the dollar zone passively to accept these imports. It will actually have to encourage them by positive action. In 1947, the Economic Commission for Europe estimated that " to restore equilibrium in Europe's balance of payments with overseas will require . . . a 56 per cent. increase in Europe's exports or a 36 per cent. contraction in its imports " or a combination of these two methods. The position appeared somewhat better in 1948, but even assuming a fairly substantial reduction of imports, the increase in exports would probably still have to reach 30 to 40 per cent. compared with the 1947 figures.

Some observers have drawn courage from the recent increase in United States imports. During the first eleven months of 1948, imports rose by about 24 per cent. while exports fell by about 15 per cent. The two movements combined achieved a reduction in the American trade surplus by nearly 40 per cent. But it seems somewhat premature to conclude from the results of one year alone that this improvement indicates a fundamental reversal of trends. A good part of the reduction in American exports is no doubt due to the fact that the rest of the world, despite Marshall aid, did not have sufficient dollars to buy more American goods. And in any case, even at their 1948 level, American imports have just barely recovered their 1938 value at stable prices. Yet, under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade concluded in 1947, the United States had, in 1948, consented to some reduction in tariffs. From such facts as are at present known, it is not possible to conclude that equilibrium could result from a purely " spontaneous " increase in American imports.

(VI)

It appears far more likely at present that when the time limit is reached, in 1952, the United States will no longer be able to avoid the issue which it was one of the purposes of the Marshall plan to postpone. The preachers of multilateralism will then have to choose between living up to their principles or forgetting all thought of an

" American age ". The two solutions open to them are almost equally unpleasant and involve heavy sacrifices.

If multilateralism is to be restored, it can be done only at the cost of deliberately wiping out America's export surplus, sacrificing certain industries and activities now sheltering behind tariffs and subsidies, reducing working hours, breaking monopolies—and by that very process preparing the demise of her present-day ruling classes. For such is the inevitable result of any radical change in the distribution of the national income which would follow from such a programme. Multilateralism at that price may be found a shade expensive. Yet, it might still be worth while paying that price for the sake of all-round prosperity.

Indeed, the other alternative, pushed to its logical conclusion means not only the consolidation of the present *de facto* structure of world economy, but its perpetuation *in a sense ultimately unfavourable to the United States.* Economically, the world would then continue to be divided, as it virtually is at present, into three large groups : a group of unplanned economies situated in the dollar zone ; a group of semi-planned economies centring on the present E.R.P. countries, in which the British Commonwealth is likely to play a leading rôle ; and, finally, the group of planned, totalitarian economies dominated by the U.S.S.R. If that position were accepted as more or less permanent, the second group would no doubt pursue its efforts towards recovering economic independence. The process would be lengthy and costly. It would involve many hardships and could not possibly be completed by 1952. But ultimately, it would succeed, for one paramount reason which can be summed up in two words : no alternative. Within that second group, multilateral trade could no doubt be developed to a considerable extent. If, in addition, some trade could also be re-established with the Eastern European countries belonging to the third group, the whole process could be speeded up.

If the United States accepts this alternative, it is a foregone conclusion that the countries of the dollar area would soon come to feel the effects of what would be isolationism in reverse. They would not then for long be able to remain unplanned economies. On the contrary, they would have to effect deliberate, planned, changes in the structure of their economies. They would thus have to accept those very sacrifices which, by adopting the second solution, they would have sought to elude. In that case, the Marshall plan would indeed have produced the paradoxical effect recently defined by a French journalist, Monsieur Servan Schreiber* who wrote : " They (the Americans) perceive that the success of the Marshall plan would imply the coming of State socialism the world over and the

*Jean Jacques Servan Schreiber, *Le Monde*, Paris, December 25, 1948.

isolation of the United States " and that " it would condemn America to poverty in the midst of abundance."

Reasoning on somewhat similar lines, a few months earlier*, I called attention to the fact that the success of the Marshall plan means the restoration of Europe's solvency and that " solvency and political independence are largely conterminous." America would thus isolate herself not only economically, but also politically—a factor she is unlikely to overlook in her present conflict with Russian power, were she even inclined to put up with its economic consequences.

In strict logic, therefore, the United States should opt for the first alternative : multilateralism and an import surplus. But in practical politics no clear-cut decision is probable that would leave no retreat. Such an uncompromising choice is the more unlikely as, everything considered, the general trend of economic development is away from multilateralism. It has been argued that the increasing industrialization of many heretofore mainly agricultural countries is in itself working in that direction. Be that as it may, multilateralism requires political security. That condition was in the main fulfilled during the century which elapsed between the Congress of Vienna and the shots fired at Sarajevo. Since then, we have entered a new " time of troubles ", to use Professor Toynbee's expression, in which exclusive reliance on a highly developed international division of labour entails risks patently too great to bear.

It would not, therefore, be surprising if the United States adopted a compromise involving aid to Europe *on a reduced scale*. In his recent inaugural address, President Truman hinted at aid for the development of backward areas. That would *indirectly* help the E.R.P. countries. But *direct* help—although any such plan will still be denied for some time to come, for " pedagogical " reasons—is, in my opinion, by no means unlikely. The indirect method would be too slow in its effects. Such a compromise would have the advantage of enabling both sides to spread the structural changes in their economies, now unavoidable, over a period more consistent with the magnitude of the task. If it took close on 30 years, from 1919 to 1947 (" convertibility crisis "), for the break-up of the old economic order to accomplish itself, the establishment of a new order cannot be achieved in a race against the clock, within four years and three months.

Were this indeed to be the shape of things to come, the economics of 1952 would, in some degree at least, bear out another of Monsieur Servan Schreiber's predictions. " In truth," he wrote, " the fate of the Marshall plan is not to succeed, but to remain necessary."

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*R. P. Schwarz, *The Meaning of the Marshall Plan*, THE FORTNIGHTLY, April 1948.

DEVELOPING THE COLONIES—I.

By Geoffrey Nunn

SINCE the war ended, the policies of the colonial powers towards their dependent peoples have been floodlit as never before. The world food shortage, the dollar famine, the economic collapse of much of the Far East, the dropping of the iron curtain, debates in F.A.O., debates in the Trusteeship Council—all these have followed one another to keep the searchlights playing on colonial territories in general, and on the British colonial territories in Africa in particular. There are two reasons why the British African territories have come in for so much attention. The first, because to the United States in particular the phrase "colonial policy" seems always to mean *British* colonial policy. (Criticisms of French, Dutch, Belgian or Portuguese colonial policy are rare.) The second, because it is to Africa that many people are looking to play a leading part in curing the economic sickness of the free world.

What then are the characteristics of British post-war colonial policy? What philosophy underlies the acts of Governments all over the Colonial Empire? Does British colonial policy require apology? Or only explanation? It is the purpose of this and a subsequent article to attempt the answers to questions such as these and, by examining the concept of "colonial development and welfare" which has become the ruling slogan in colonial affairs since 1940, to bring to notice urgent pointers to future action.

What may be called the modern era of colonial development began in 1929, when for the first time in the history of British colonial enterprise the Imperial Parliament passed an Act designed to contribute to the development of the Colonial Empire as a whole. This Act was, however, merely the first, shy fruit of a seed which had been growing since it was planted by the Congress of Berlin of 1885. To many people this is known principally as the conference at which the modern map of Africa was settled. That was, in itself, a considerable feat of diplomacy and has proved to be an enduring work. The Congress in fact produced something even more important and, it is to be hoped, even more enduring. This was a declaration by which all the colonial powers present bound themselves "to promote the moral and material well-being of the native populations"—the first attempt ever made in the long history of the seizure of African lands to establish an international code of behaviour for colonial powers

towards dependent peoples.

The essential goodness of this resolve became obscured within a short time of its having been made, so that in the 'nineties little was heard of well-being, either moral or material. The slogan of that time was " the white man's burden." But the Congress' idea was not dead, for in the early years of the present century " the white man's burden " gave way to the philosophy of " trusteeship "—an entirely British conception, and one which remained entirely British until it came to be internationally adopted in the mandates laid on the shoulders of certain powers after the 1914-1918 war. By 1930 Great Britain had again taken the lead in the development of the philosophical foundations of colonial policy and her statesmen and administrators were introducing all over Africa what was known in the new administrative language as " indirect rule". In the early 'thirties voices were heard enunciating the still newer philosophy of " partnership ". In 1940 the phrase " colonial development and welfare " was coined.

From " the moral and material well-being " to "development and welfare " is a circular journey—provided that " development " is understood to mean, as it did in the minds of those who first used the new label, the development not only of the material resources of colonial territories, but that of their human resources as well. The idea first implanted in men's minds in Berlin 60 years ago has never, in fact, been entirely submerged. Even in the " white man's burden " phase it was not eclipsed. The balance was soon righted, for if " trusteeship " means anything in a colonial context it surely means that it is the intention of the trustee that those whose possessions he holds in trust may look forward to the day when they will have the ordering of their own affairs. And so with " indirect rule " and " partnership ". The former means nothing if not the development of indigenous forms of government to a stage where they can merge into something fitted to modern conditions ; the latter clearly envisages the development both of material and human resources. The point need not be laboured.

There is, however, a further point arising from the steady growth of the idea underlying British colonial policy, which cannot be over-stressed—which cannot, in fact, be laboured sufficiently—namely, that even in the last few years the phrase " colonial development and welfare " has taken on a wider significance than it had when, only eight years ago, it was first widely used in official documents. In those days it meant the development of the material and human resources of each colony and the raising of the standard of living of its people. If not only the colonies are to be rescued from back-wardness but the world is to be freed from hunger and want within a reasonable time, the development of the colonies and particularly

of Africa (always a matter of urgency although but imperfectly recognized as such until recently) has now become supremely important.

The history of the translation of the idea into action may be conveniently told by reference to the various Acts of the British Parliament which have dealt with the subject. The idea was already 40 years old when in 1929 the United Kingdom Government set up a fund to assist the development of agriculture and industry in the colonies. £1,000,000 a year was to be paid into a colonial development fund, which was to be used " to promote commerce with, or industry in, the United Kingdom." A Colonial Development Committee was created to consider and advise the Secretary of State for the Colonies on applications by colonies for grants or loans from the fund.

This colonial development fund Act remained in force until 1940 when it was replaced by the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of that year. During the eleven years of its existence schemes totalling £5,000,000 were financed and, when the Fund came to be wound up, commitments for the future amounted to £1,600,000. The new Act provided £55,000,000 over ten years, of which £50,000,000 were to be devoted to the development of material resources of and the welfare of colonial peoples " and £5,000,000 to research or inquiry." The Act also relieved the colonies from liability in respect of certain loans, including those they had raised under the 1929 Act, and covered the forward commitments of the colonial development fund, which was wound up. The Colonial Development and Welfare Act, 1945, raised the amount of money to be made available from £55,000,000 to £130,000,000 and lengthened the period of the 1940 Act by five years. That is to say, £120,000,000 was provided by the new Act (which is still in force) for development and £10,000,000 for research—the whole amount to be made available to the colonies over the period of fifteen years from April 1940 to April 1955.

The passing of the Overseas Resources Development Act of 1948 brings the story up to date. This Act established two corporations known as the Colonial Development Corporation and the Overseas Food Corporation and has inaugurated an experiment in colonial development the value of which it is still too early to assess. The provisions of the Act should, however, be recorded.

The Overseas Food Corporation falls within the sphere of influence of the Minister of Food and cannot undertake any enterprise in a colonial territory without an invitation from the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Corporation is, nevertheless, charged with carrying out what has come to be known as the East African Groundnuts Scheme which is centred on Tanganyika. This project is likely

to remain for some time the principal activity of the corporation in a colonial territory, for the other corporation which was established by the Act falls within the sphere of influence of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. It must be assumed, therefore, that except in special circumstances and for special reasons the Colonial Secretary will prefer to use the Colonial Development Corporation for the development of enterprises in the colonies. That corporation has as its objective the expansion of the production of food and raw materials and the fostering of colonial trade in general. The corporations may borrow, under Treasury guarantee, up to £110,000,000 in the case of the Colonial Development Corporation and up to £55,000,000 in that of the Overseas Food Corporation.

The passing of the Act of 1929 amounted to a revolution in the colonial policy of Great Britain. Yet in its eleven years of life colonies drew only £6,600,000 from the fund, or only slightly more than half the amount which they might have drawn during the period. From this it would seem that the new policy was not as warmly welcomed overseas as its authors no doubt hoped that it would be. It is not surprising, however, that this was so. Colonial opinion may be forgiven for failing to be impressed by an Act the policy underlying which was more concerned with remedying the unemployment situation in the British Isles than with the disinterested performance of the obligations of a trustee. Indeed, the disingenuous presentation of what was undoubtedly a step forward in colonial policy provides a useful lesson in the folly of being disingenuous when dealing with colonial peoples, as well as an illustration of at least one reason why the British are accused by the vocal minority in all colonies of insincerity and exploitation. Two facts, indeed, combined to reinforce such accusations. Not only was the whole emphasis of the 1929 Act placed on material development, but "welfare" was so far excluded as to prevent any of the funds provided under the Act being spent on improving education. (Technical education was not, however, subjected to this ban.) Nor was the sum offered by the Act (£1,000,000 a year) likely to capture colonial imaginations, amounting as it did to about 4d. a head of the population of the colonies.

The Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 was accompanied, when it was published as a Bill, with a statement of policy. This paper was a considerable improvement on previous performances. The authorities had apparently learned their lesson, for the new paper spoke of "protecting and advancing the interests of the inhabitants of the Colonies," of "full and balanced development" and of the removal of certain "limiting and hampering conditions that attached to expenditure from the existing fund." For the first time there was a serious reference to research. Indeed, it seemed to

those abroad at the time that all the lessons had been learned. Phrases such as : " The first emphasis in this much enlarged policy of colonial development will be on the improvement of the economic position of the colonies " went far to refute the " exploitation " cry against the previous Act. It remained, or so it seemed, only to show by performance that the cry of insincerity was equally groundless. When we read promises of " assistance and guidance, but no dictation from London " and " no derogation from the rights and privileges of local legislatures " it seemed to some of us as though the golden age of colonial administration had indeed arrived. In a final burst of repentance the paper ended with the words : " The primary purpose . . . is to promote the prosperity and happiness of the peoples of the colonial empire." Surely with such words the promotion of " commerce with and industry in the United Kingdom " of the 1929 Act might seem to have been decently buried ?

It was, therefore, disappointing that the effect of this admirably drafted announcement had to be spoiled by its opening paragraphs, which tied the whole new policy to the recommendations of the West India Royal Commission, published on the same day. The appointment of that commission had arisen from serious and widespread rioting throughout the West Indies in 1938. Public feeling in this country had been disturbed and was still uneasy over rumours of neglect and intolerable poverty in the West Indian Islands. The commission's recommendations had, therefore, been awaited with some impatience, some hope and some apprehension. The simultaneous publication of the recommendations and the statement amounted to a juxtaposition which recalled to many still sceptical minds the old saying that the only means of getting anything important done in the colonies was to riot. Nor were the same minds slow to evolve and announce the moral that the new Act provided " conscience money "—a phrase which is still widely used in public discussion of the subject of colonial development in certain colonies. Nor did it become easier for the men on the spot to remove this impression as the years passed and the full report of the Royal Commission remained unpublished. It was not published, indeed, until 1947. But that is another story.

Nevertheless the new policy was widely recognized as the great improvement which it in fact was. Moreover, there was another and most important aspect of the Act. When it was passed Great Britain was facing alone the consequences of the collapse of France before the onrush of the German blitzkrieg. That Parliament could turn aside in the midst of the crowding and crushing anxieties of that time to debate colonial development and initiate another great forward step in colonial policy was, to say the least, a great and encouraging act of faith. As such it was recognized throughout the

colonial empire. No matter that the limitations imposed by the war were such as to preclude any immediate or spectacular progress under the Act. The colonies fully understood the necessity to divert men, machines, materials and ships to tasks more closely connected with the winning of the war. There was therefore no reaction other than sympathetic understanding when the British Government made it known that the passing of the Act could not be followed immediately by large-scale developments of the type envisaged by its promoters.

The opening move to carry out the 1940 and 1945 Acts took the form of a request by the Colonial Secretary that all colonies should prepare " sketch plans to form the framework of development policy." This phrase should be carefully noted for it is largely due to the use of it that the ten-year development plans of some colonies may be said to have " got off on the wrong foot "—a situation which culminated, so far as the plan for Nigeria is concerned, in the Select Committee on the Estimates dismissing that plan in 1948 with the remark : " This is not planning." This point will be considered in the next article.

A number of colonies appointed a Secretary for Development, to take charge of the preparation of their plans. At the same time, in order to comply with the request of the Colonial Office that local opinion should be associated to the greatest possible extent with the planning work, most colonies appointed development committees. The composition of the committees varied from colony to colony according to local conditions, of which by no means the least decisive was the constitutional and political situation at the time the committee was appointed. The method of preparing each plan varied as greatly as did the stages through which it passed between the time that the Development Secretary made his first rough notes and the time about two years later when the finished plan was ready for the eye of the Colonial Office. Only one more stage was common to all colonial plans. When received in the Colonial Office they were examined by the Colonial Economic and Development Advisory Council, which had replaced the Colonial Development Committee when the 1929 Act had been repealed and replaced in 1940. They were then returned with the recommendations of the Council to the Colony concerned, once again to go their individual ways.

For little short of 50 years the idea lay germinating ; for 10 years more one feeble shoot was all the evidence that the seed was still alive. In the last eight years two seemingly vigorous leaves have at last appeared. Is all well with the plant now ? Its strength and weakness will be examined in the next article.

(The author has recently retired from the Colonial Service after 19 years in West Africa, the Mediterranean and the West Indies. His second article will be published in the April number.)

CROWN AND COMMONWEALTH

By Leslie Bishop

THE Crown, no longer the central symbol of an imperial system which rests on power and is maintained by force, is still a symbol of that type of constitutional democracy which derives from Britain's historic past. It is difficult to define its meaning in precise detail, or to try to superimpose a single meaning on the whole Commonwealth.* No unitary view of the Crown adequately reveals the fact that it has come to symbolize different things in different countries. For some people in Eire, for example, according to Lord Killanin, it has symbolized oppression.† For some people in India, it has stood for dispassionate justice, administered by the representatives of the British Raj. For some in Canada, it has come to represent the achievement of full Canadian nationhood. If to citizens in Eire it has been an emblem of dependence, to citizens of Canada it is an emblem of independence.

In short, the Crown has a special relationship with each of the Commonwealth nations, based on the peculiar experience and idealism of that nation. This relationship is now wholly determined by the nation concerned, an historical fact which Mr. Attlee appears to recognize.

It seems likely that India will decide to remain in the Commonwealth, at least for the time being. The value of such a decision—made by India of her own free will—can hardly be exaggerated and it will be worth the utmost efforts to preserve a happy relationship, based securely on the goodwill of a fully independent nation. Quite possibly, under Mr. Nehru's leadership, India may stand as the exemplar of constitutional democracy in Asia, and that result would be an ample reward for the work of the Indian Civil Service.

Mr. Nehru has consistently stated that India will not be content with Dominion status.‡ He has said that nothing will prevent India from becoming a sovereign republic but he is believed to favour some more organic relationship with the Commonwealth than a treaty

*Nor is the Crown's significance limited to the Commonwealth. It has a certain unofficial and intangible significance for the people of the United States.

†House of Lords *Hansard* December 15, 1948, Col. 1076. For a contrary view see Lord Dunsany's short poem in the *Sunday Times* November 28.

‡In a dispatch appearing in the *Daily Telegraph* of December 20 the New Delhi correspondent quoted Dr. Sitramayya as saying: "Dominion status must go." Any association with the Commonwealth would have to be "an association of free and independent countries agreeing to have certain reciprocal relations which do not limit in any way their freedom with regard to domestic or foreign policy."

alliance. A resolution passed by the Constituent Assembly on January 22, 1947, declared the Assembly's objective to be a " sovereign independent republic " for India ; the draft constitution later referred to a " sovereign democratic republic ". To what extent, if any, Mr. Nehru's views were influenced by the London discussions of October 1948, is a matter for conjecture. At a press conference in New Delhi on November 12, according to *The Times* correspondent, Mr. Nehru " gave a dispassionate account of his recent visit to London and Paris, with special reference to the Commonwealth prime ministers' conference."

> He said (the *Times* dispatch continues) that while on the one hand he felt that by virtue of historical processes India had to be a completely sovereign independent republic, on the other hand, with the world as it was to-day, it was not desirable for any country to seek to break existing links or isolate itself. It would be for the Constituent Assembly to take a final decision on India's relation with the Commonwealth and this would be done on the basis of the objectives resolution which it had already passed. Meanwhile the Indian government would continue to confer with the United Kingdom and other Dominion governments on how far mutual relationships and contacts could be developed . . .

On November 28, the *Sunday Statesman* reported from New Delhi, in part, as follows :

> India's continued association with the Commonwealth is supported, in principle, by Congress members of the Constituent Assembly.
>
> After long discussions with the Congress Party yesterday and to-day, Pandit Nehru was authorized to proceed with the task of preparing a formula which would govern this country's new relationship with the Commonwealth.
>
> Pandit Nehru is reported to have explained at the party meetings how India's status as an independent republic—to which the Constituent Assembly is pledged—could be reconciled with her position as a Commonwealth country, particularly in regard to citizenship rights vis-à-vis other members. A tentative plan is said to have been mentioned by the Prime Minister and approved by the party after some discussion.

On December 12, according to the United Press, the working committee of the Indian Congress approved a resolution on foreign politics in favour of retaining India's link with the Commonwealth. The resolution declared that the attainment of independence would necessarily change India's present relations with the Commonwealth but it added : " India, however, desires to maintain all such links with other countries as do not come in the way of her freedom of action and independence. The Congress would welcome her free association with the independent nations of the Commonwealth for their common gain and the promotion of world peace." The resolution affirmed " India's full adherence to the principles underlying the United Nations Charter " and said : " It is the constant aim of India to maintain friendly, co-operative relations with other nations, and to avoid the entanglement of military or similar alliances which tend to divide the world into rival groups, and thus endanger

world peace." This resolution has been interpreted* as " giving the Indian government full freedom, for the time being, to carry out its plan for keeping India within the framework of the Commonwealth, although as a sovereign republic."

Regardless of whether or not India remains a member of the Commonwealth—and this, of course, is a matter for India alone to decide—there is no reason to doubt Mr. Nehru's genuine desire to maintain a close friendship with the constitutional democracies of the west. Unlike Eire, India does not wish—at all events for the present—to break the link with the Crown. The Government of India is believed to have worked out a formula which would provide for the recognition of the King as the chief citizen of the Commonwealth. The Indian people, as a whole, do not view the Crown with anything of the bitterness which was felt apparently in certain quarters in Eire. There has been some feeling against the British in the past, though even this is now melting away. There was never any bitterness against the Crown.† To the ordinary Indian, the Crown has been the symbol of personal rule, as administered in the past by the officials of the British Raj—sometimes unimaginatively but not tyrannically. It has not symbolized oppression for the humble villager, who was accustomed in the past to go to these officials for relief from oppression by members of his own race. Whether in the long term India will seek to retain the symbol of the Crown, time alone will tell ; theoretically, it would be hard to reconcile its retention with the establishment of a republic.

The maintenance of good relations between the Commonwealth and the new India will require—and deserves—a continuous effort on both sides. India's friendship must not be treated lightly or taken for granted. It may be noted that a good beginning was made by the Canadian representatives at the October premiers' meeting in London. At that time, Mr. Nehru had long talks with Mr. St. Laurent, now Prime Minister of the senior Dominion. He also called twice on Mr. Mackenzie King, Canada's retiring premier, who was confined to his hotel bedroom by illness but who played a not uninfluential part in the conference from his sick bed. In one of those friendly conversations, according to reports, Mr. King spoke to Mr. Nehru of the wholesome tradition of rebellion which is one of the

*In a Reuters dispatch appearing in the *Irish Times* December 20.

†Mr. Colin Reid the *Daily Telegraph's* special correspondent who recently returned wrote on December 22, that " the statues of Queen Victoria in many cities and towns of India are still objects of veneration. . . ."

The most beautiful statue of Queen Victoria seen by the present writer stands in the library of the House of Commons in Ottawa. Certainly, the prestige of the Crown, both in India and Canada, owes much to the character of Queen Victoria and to her conception of her duty. She was old-fashioned but she adhered to her principles. She had an affection for all her children, which followed them to the frontiers of the new world. She inaugurated that happy personal relationship between the Crown and the people of individual Commonwealth nations, which her successors have maintained and strengthened.

birthrights of the British peoples. He recalled that his own grandfather, William Lyon Mackenzie, had been a rebel. He himself, he might have added, had been a fighter for freedom in his time—but, with honour satisfied, with independence assured—there was something worth-while in this informal friendship among nations that sprawled over half the globe. That, however, is part of Canada's story—as well as India's.

Professor K. C. Wheare, Gladstone professor of government and public administration at Oxford, has described the Crown as the symbol of Commonwealth unity. " The Crown ", he wrote* " at once unites and distinguishes the British Commonwealth of Nations." This is an important theory which demands, and has received in Canada as elsewhere, thoughtful consideration. There are members of the Canadian Progressive Conservative Party who fully concur in it, but Commonwealth " unity "—never very closely defined by its advocates—is viewed with apprehension by some people in Canada. They fear that such " unity " may be used as the pretext for attempts by Downing Street to secure political objectives at Canada's expense. (Such attempts have not been unknown in the past). Rightly or wrongly, they put " Commonwealth unity " in the same category as the " colonial subordination " of a bygone day. Canadian affection for the Crown, on the other hand, is not a matter of controversy, but a robust fact.

Dr. Mansergh is correct in the statement : " Canada remains opposed equally to the centralization and the dissolution of the Commonwealth."† The Crown's position in Canada is as strong—perhaps even stronger—than in Great Britain. But this is not due to its Commonwealth connotations. It is due to the fact that, on Canadian territory, through Canadian enactment, the Crown has become a distinctively Canadian symbol which no other nation—not even the United Kingdom—has the right to question. It is the Crown of Canada, and it shines with the special radiance—deriving some of its lustre from the crown of pre-Revolutionary France, whence the early Quebec settlers came—of the France of *Le Roi Soleil*. For Canadians—be they English-speaking or French-speaking—it represents the sovereign stature and dignity of their nation.

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*In an article in Toronto *Saturday Night*, November 27. A similar view was expressed by Mr. H. V. Hodson, assistant editor of the *Sunday Times*, in a recent broadcast : " I do not believe it should be impossible to find the right formal expression of our unity—one capable of satisfying the new, as well as the old, sovereignties of the Commonwealth. The essential thing is that we should remain un-foreign to each other. Personally, I feel that, provided we are not too nice about legal forms and reduce the problem to its simplest essentials, the secret will continue to lie in a broad acceptance of the Crown as titular head of the whole Commonwealth, symbolizing the organic unity on which that un-foreign-ness depends." (Broadcast in the B.B.C.'s home service and printed in *London Calling*.)

†*The Commonwealth and the Nations*, by Nicholas Mansergh, Abe Bailey professor of British Commonwealth Relations at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Chatham House. 8s. 6d.

Canada being a polyglot nation, and therein lies its strength and its promise, one might imagine that children coming to Canada from other lands would not greatly value the institutions of their new country. Quite the reverse has happened. Thanks, perhaps, to the democratic educational system of the country, where a good, general education is free for all children up to university entrance, the children of the " new Canadians " enthusiastically espouse the British legacy which they inherit with their Canadian citizenship. (It might be said, in passing, that the " new Canadians " contribute, from their own native cultures, elements which enrich the pattern of Canadian democracy but it remains, in broad outline, a British pattern.)

Canada, then, solved the problem in a typically Canadian way, that retained advantages, eliminated hard feelings and safeguarded Canadian independence, by bringing the Crown to Ottawa. It is important to note that the evolution of the Canadian Crown was completed in the person of King George VI in our own day, as has been described by Professor A. R. M. Lower :

> When, in the spring of 1939, the King personally visited Canada, he came unaccompanied by any member of his British government and, as King of Canada, held his high court of Parliament and from his throne in his Senate chamber ceremonially signified his assent to Acts of the Canadian Parliament. In February of the same year a member of the Canadian parliament, J. T. Thorson (a Canadian of Icelandic descent), had introduced into the Commons a bill stating that Canada should become a belligerent only on a declaration of war made by the King on the advice of his Canadian government. The principle involved—that Great Britain could not automatically commit Canada to war—would have left to Canada the right of neutrality.
>
> The resolution was not put to a vote but, when war came in September of that year, the Canadian declaration did not occur for a full week after that of Great Britain. During that week the United States treated Canada as a neutral country and the German consular service also carried on its duties. On September 10, the King of Canada made his separate declaration of war. Canada had achieved the last test of legal sovereignty, the right of war and peace. . . .*

The representatives of the Crown in Canada have not all been ideal public servants but, if there have been moments of stupidity, there have also been instances of idealism and vision. Above all, there has been a good measure of long-suffering forbearance—on both sides. Forbearance is the bedrock of Canadian evolution. On the side of statesmanship, for instance, we can point to the decision of Governor Sir Charles Bagot (1842—1843) to accept the French-Canadian, " rebel ", Lafontaine in office. Among the blunders, we can count Lord Byng's refusal of Mr. Mackenzie King's request for a dissolution of parliament in 1926. This was one of the issues on which Mr. King fought and won the subsequent election. " To him ", in Dr. Lower's words, " it was intolerable that the representatives of

*_Colony to Nation_ : A History of Canada, by A. R. M. Lower. Longmans, Green, Toronto. 1946

the people should be interfered with by a pale shadow of that Crown—which had long since been deprived of its arbitrary authority."

The office of Governor-General is one of the most exacting in the whole field of the British public service, presenting endless opportunities for doing the wrong thing and very few for self-expression. Of recent years, the Crown has been served in Canada by men of outstanding quality. While correctly refraining from any political activities, they have intervened, with good effect, in the cultural sphere : Lord Bessborough in inaugurating the Dominion Drama Festival and Lord Tweedsmuir in founding prizes for Canadian authorship.

When the Crown came to Canada, any distrust of it that there might have been among Canadians, as a whole, was dissolved. Downing Street would still be carefully scrutinized but the Crown was received into the hearts of the Canadian people. Indeed, the Crown might be held to have a special significance for French-Canadians as symbolizing the constitutional guarantee under which their rights, as a minority, are protected. Historians recall Lord Elgin's famous question : " Who will venture to say that the last hand which waves the British flag on American ground may not be that of a French-Canadian ? "

Of course, the mere fact that the Crown is above the suspicion of political activity is cause for added anxiety on the part of that comparatively small body of Canadians who favour a republic. They fear that Downing Street may some day be tempted to try to use the prestige of the Crown as an instrument for exerting pressure of a subtle kind on Canada, to achieve United Kingdom objectives. If such an attempt were ever made, it would greatly strengthen the hands of the republicans. The suggestion has been made that the constitutional democracies of the world should form an association wider than the present British Commonwealth and that such an association might be willing to subscribe to a brief code of principles—such, for instance, as the American Bill of Rights. This code—and not the Crown—would become the symbol of the association and the expression of its idealism. Such an association would, of course, have tremendous advantages but, surely, it would be desirable to retain the King—and the President of the United States—as the leading representatives of their peoples. To abolish the Crown and substitute a form of words may sound attractive to the theorist but would it satisfy the public's deeply-rooted craving for a personal relationship with the head of the State ? Would a verbal formula hold the interest of the great mass of the people and effectively focus their loyalty in times of crisis ?

It is easy to under-estimate popular affection for the Crown. Certainly, no-one who witnessed any part of the Royal Visit to

Canada in the spring and summer of 1939 will forget those scenes in which citizens lined railway tracks and streets to welcome their King and Queen. The photograph-files of Canadian newspapers are packed with evidence of the affection with which the people of that great Dominion regard the Royal Family. Surely—to put the significance of the Crown at its lowest—there is a real value in an institution which brings so much happiness, so much colour and so much genuine goodwill into the lives of millions ?

For developing the idea of the Canadian Crown, a large share of the credit must go to John S. Ewart, who wrote the definitive constitutional work on this subject. Some credit also must go to Mr. Mackenzie King who, early in his career, had fought against interference by Downing Street in Canadian affairs and who was to give the Crown a new and assured position on Canadian soil. Also, in common with other Canadians, Mr. King has a sincere personal affection for the members of the present royal family. On his last visit to London as Canadian Prime Minister, King George VI visited him, an old friend, in his sick-room.

During their Canadian tour nine years before, the King and Queen visited Laurier House, the residence of the Canadian prime minister in Ottawa, and the occasion is described in the closing words of Emil Ludwig's sympathetic little book (Macmillan, Toronto, 1944), which presents Mr. King as he hopes to be remembered :

> Mr. King drew their attention to a framed document which hangs on the wall at the entrance to the library. It was a Royal Proclamation issued in 1837—the year Queen Victoria came to the throne—to obtain the arrest of all who had been guilty of " Rebellion, Murder and Robbery "—and offered a reward of one thousand pounds " to anyone who will apprehend, and deliver up to Justice, William Lyon Mackenzie." The date is printed : " Thursday, 3 o'clock p.m. 7th Dec." but, in the rush, the year 1837 was forgotten, although time had been found to print below a hurried " God Save the Queen."
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> Standing at the side of the King, the Prime Minister commented upon the changes which a hundred years have brought to Canada in the relations of the Crown and its advisers. It must have been a satisfaction to a heart burning for the ideals of liberty and justice.
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> When I visited (Mackenzie) King (Mr. Ludwig recalled) he showed me the 1837 proclamation. At its side, similarly framed, there is now another—dated September 10, 1939—Canada's declaration of war. It bears the signature of the great-grandson of Queen Victoria and the signature of the grandson of the rebel Mackenzie.
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> What a source of reflection, I thought, for a man who never forgets the struggles and privations of his ancestors. Here was his King ! There was his grandfather ! Each proclamation spoke of the age-long fight for freedom.

(*The author, formerly an Open Scholar in Modern History at Oxford, is London Correspondent of the " Winnipeg Free Press."*)

INDO-CHINA AND HOME RULE

By David Ingber

BORDERED by Burma, China and Siam, Indo-China constitutes just what its name implies—the age-old bridge between India and China. With an area of about 286,000 sq. miles—one and a half times the size of France—the population totals 26,500,000, of whom four-fifths are Annamese, and the remainder Cambodians (Khmers), Thais, Laotians, Chinese, and a variety of other races of mixed Malayan-Chinese stock. By virtue of their number and ancient civilization, the Annamese stand out as the most representative section of the population, and are concentrated in Annam, Tongking, and Cochin-China.

Relations between France and Indo-China date from 1787 when, thanks to a far-sighted missionary, Bishop Pigneau de Behaine, a treaty was signed between Louis XVI and Nguyen Phua Anh, the *Chua* (king) of Cochin-China and claimant to the throne of Annam. This alliance and the series of events which followed from it have left a lasting imprint on the life and customs of Indo-China, whose evolution has been quite distinct from the main pattern of French imperial development. Three centuries of interchange of goods and ideas substantially contributed towards Indo-China's economic and cultural progress.

The second stage in Indo-China's growth to nationhood occurred between 1881 and 1889. From it emerged the Indo-Chinese Federation as it existed until August 1946. It consisted of :

A Colony :	Cochin-China	(population 4,700,000), ceded to France in 1862.	
Four Protectorates :	Cambodia,	(pop. 3,200,000)	(1863)
	Tongking,	(pop. 9,500,000)	(1884)
	Annam,	(pop. 6,220,000)	(1886)
	Laos,	(pop. 1,500,000)	(1893)

This period 1889-1940 proved the most fruitful in Indo-China's history, and was reflected by increased capital investment, higher production and the growth of the population. The French system of higher education produced a remarkable galaxy of Indo-Chinese scholars, lawyers and scientists. A Frenchman, Father Alexandre de Rhodes, invented the " Quoc Ngu "—a method of phonetic transcription of Vietnamese language in Roman orthography in place of the old Chinese characters. Thereafter, higher education ceased to be the privilege of a small minority, and became national education

open to all. Medical services, non-existent in 1875, began to appear in ever-increasing numbers. In 1940, Indo-China had five Pasteur Institutes, 125 modern hospitals, 500 dispensaries, fever, leper and other welfare centres. From 10,000,000 in 1875, the population has increased to 26,000,000 in 1940. In five decades, Indo-China had been rushed through political, economic and social changes which took centuries to mature in western Europe. Japan's invasion of Indo-China in 1940 and surrender in August 1945, marked the third phase in Indo-China's history, and the turning-point in her relations with France.

Geographically, Viet Nam is the ancient Annamese name for Annam, Tongking and Cochin-China—territories where the majority of the population is of Annamese race. Politically, the term applies to the republic of which Ho-Chi-Minh is the President, and which controls Northern Annam and most of Tongking.

Viet Nam claims for self-rule began long before the war, and were greatly encouraged by the Japanese during the occupation. In 1941-1942, a coalition of anti-French Home Rule parties came into being under the name of *Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Hoi*—better known as *Viet Minh* (Vietnamese Front). Chief among these groups were the Communists—the only organized party in Indo-China—who soon became Viet Minh's dominant element. For tactical reasons, however, the Communist label disappeared from Viet Minh's platform, and, outwardly, it became the Nationalist movement *par excellence*. Its basic aims were : (*a*) complete and unconditional independence, (*b*) eviction and repatriation of the French and (*c*) absorption of the Protectorates.

On March 9, 1945, the Japanese took over full military control of Indo-China, removed its 40,000 French citizens to internment camps, imprisoned the Governor-General, Admiral Decoux, and evicted all French central and local authorities. When on August 15, Japan capitulated, Indo-China was a country without a master. This afforded Viet Minh the unique opportunity of carrying out a virtually bloodless revolution at blitzkrieg speed. In the following three weeks, it established itself as the Central Executive in Tongking, Annam and Cochin-China. On August 28, it proclaimed the " Democratic Republic of Viet Nam." This was the signal for large-scale anti-French outrages, coupled with systematic destruction of French property. On September 19, British troops of S.E.A.C., under Major-General Gracey, landed at Saigon, together with a small force of French troops and some civil and military authorities, and had no alternative but to take steps to restore law and order. On September 22, British troops occupied the prison, the G.P.O. and other public buildings, saving hundreds of French hostages from certain death. The next day the Viet Minh ' authorities ' fled from

Saigon, and the French administration again took over the affairs of Cochin-China.

In January 1946, a general election for a national assembly was organized by Viet Minh, which gave it an overwhelming majority. It was reshuffled in March to include four Ministers belonging to the opposition, but retained all effective power by its control of the press, police, and censorship. Its next move was the total liquidation of all opposition elements throughout the republic. Power lay henceforth not with the Government, but with Tong Bo—the Communist Party's Central Committee, and a so-called national resistance Council, headed by Vo Nguyen Giap, C. in C. of the Vietnamese Army—the real power behind the scenes. This " shadow cabinet " which controlled Viet Minh's Secret Police and Storm Troops (Tu Ve), planned and supervised the complete annihilation of its political rivals. Viet Minh then initiated a purge of its own ranks of all ' unreliable ' followers—moderates, middle-of-the-roaders, appeasers, in short, anyone suspected of French sympathies. By the end of July, it was in sole control of the republic.

On March 6, an agreement was signed by Ho-Chi-Minh and M. Sainteny, representing the French High Commissioner, whereby France recognized the Vietnamese Republic as " a Free State within the Indo-Chinese Federation and of the French Union " having its own government, army, parliament, and finance. Concerning the union of Annam, Tongking, and Cochin-China, the agreement stipulated that " the people of Cochin China shall decide by a Referendum whether they wish to join the Vietnamese Republic." France made only two conditions : the cessation of all local hostilities before the referendum, and safeguards for French economic and other interests. Talks to this effect were to be initiated by the contracting parties. Immediately Ho-Chi-Minh's cabinet made it only too clear that it had not come into this world to live an equal terms with anyone—least of all with the French. The Dalat conference began on April 21, and ended ten days later in a complete fiasco. Viet Nam's delegates insisted that Cochin-China be included in the republic, and further talks be held in Paris. No agreement having been reached it was finally decided to resume negotiations in France—at Fontainebleau.

A large Vietnamese delegation headed by Ho-Chi-Minh arrived in Paris for the conference opening on July 6. On August 14, the French Government published a memorandum, indicating its willingness to meet the Vietnamese delegation more than half-way. The latter, however, was only prepared to take all and concede nothing. The conference achieved little, the Cochin-Chinese question being again the main stumbling-block. Nevertheless, some agreement had to be reached. On September 14, Ho-Chi-Minh

signed an eleven-point agreement, the " Modus Vivendi " (to take effect on October 30), regulating relations between France and Viet Nam with far more precision than the March 6 Convention, until a new conference could be called in January 1947 to draft a final treaty.

In Viet Nam, the " Modus Vivendi " was opposed as conceding too much to France. Some of its extremist critics described it as a downright " sell-out ". Thereafter, relations between the republic and France grew worse, and were further complicated by a wrangle over exports and customs duties in Haiphong harbour. Early in October, it became obvious that there was no way of avoiding a clash. On December 19, Viet Minh with 10,000 troops attacked Hanoi. Numerous French citizens were murdered, and the French garrison owed its safety to the merest chance. It had been confined to barracks for several days, but leave was restored on December 19. Consequently, when Viet Minh struck, most of the troops had left their quarters. Despite elaborate preparations and the element of surprise, Viet Minh's coup misfired, owing to a last-minute change of plans at headquarters, contradictory orders to combat units, and the arrival of French reinforcements. The Hanoi rising was the prelude to the full-scale colonial war throughout Viet Nam, which is still going on ferociously. Large-scale offensives by the French against Viet Minh's army in the winter of 1947-1948, brought important areas in Annam and Tongking under French control, and were followed by more limited operations in May and July. Results up to now have been far from rewarding, considering the size of the French forces (115,000 troops), and the expenditure involved (three to four billion francs per month). Unable to hold its ground against the superior French army, Viet Minh's high command resorted to extensive guerrilla warfare, sabotage and scorched earth tactics, hoping to wear down French determination by a war of attrition, and thus obtain complete independence. To-day, after three years of fighting, the situation is one of military and political stalemate, of which no end is yet in sight.

After the failure of the Dalat conference to set up an administrative framework based on the convention of March 6, the French had no alternative but to establish a temporary administration until such time as Cochin-China's fate could be decided by a referendum. A provisional self-governing republic therefore came into being on June 1, 1946, invested with complete legislative and executive powers. Critics of France (of whom there are many), and of her colonial policy (of whom there are more), denounced the Provisional Cochin-Chinese Republic as a clumsy French attempt at *Divide et Impera.*" Ho-Chi-Minh stigmatized it unjustly as against his Government.

After the outbreak of hostilities which made further negotiations

with Ho-Chi-Minh impossible, M. Bollaert, the French High Commissioner in Indo-China, was saddled with the problem of providing an effective antidote to Viet Minh's dictatorship. This led to exhaustive talks between the High Commissioner, the Cochin-Chinese Government and many other prominent spokesmen. Chief among them was Bao-Dai, the ex-Emperor of Annam, whose prestige still stands high with wide sections of Vietnamese public opinion. The outcome of these negotiations was the election on May 20, 1948, of General Nguyen Van Xuan, Premier of Cochin-China, as head of the " Provisional Central Government of South Viet Nam." This Government consists of 22 Ministers—nine representing Cochin-China, and 13 the liberated territories in Annam and Tongking—assisted by a Consultative Privy Council. On June 5, General Xuan and M. Bollaert signed the Along Bay Convention which stipulates that France recognizes South Viet Nam as an independent State and South Viet Nam adheres to the French Union as an " Associated State."

In Paris, hopes founded on this convention have now virtually faded, and the prevailing mood there, as well as in Saigon, is one of suspicion and disillusionment. It is reflected in articles not only in leftist papers—which would be natural—but in such dailies as *Le Monde*. The appointment of M. Pignon assumes therefore special significance. The solution of the Indo-Chinese tangle rests ultimately with France and the Indo-Chinese States. The French are first-rate improvisators and it may well be that the time for a settlement is nearer than one imagines. Experience will show whether France was right in playing the Xuan-Bao-Dai card.

Indo-China's tragedy has been mainly the affair of three men : Ho-Chi-Minh, Bao-Dai, and Emile Bollaert—all three hard bargainers. President Ho-Chi-Minh was born in 1894, in a small village in Northern Annam and settled in France in 1919. He joined the Seine branch of the Communist party, became member of the Third International, and editor of a newspaper *Le Paria*. Leaving for Russia in 1923, he turned up three years later in Southern China, as assistant to Borodin and Le Gallen—the top-ranking Comintern agents in S.E. Asia. After founding the Annamese section of the comintern in Hong Kong, he returned to Russia. 1940 found him back in China, and a year later he sprang into prominence as the organizer and prime mover of Viet Minh. He combines the rigid dogmatism of his Marxist training with the obstinacy of an oriental fanatic. His character has none of the outstanding gifts of a Pandit Nehru, the subtlety of a Senanayake, or the shrewd diplomacy of a Thakin Nu. Yet, his personal ascendancy cannot be denied, nor can his amazing hold on the people he misrules be diminished.

When Emile Bollaert took up his post as High Commissioner in

Indo-China, he knew only too well that the road ahead would be hard. During his eighteen months of office, he did everything possible to find an alternative which could challenge Viet Minh on its own ground. Endowed with a solid fund of personal charm, his political outlook was in full sympathy with the people of Indo-China. Unfortunately, his optimism about the Along Bay Convention proved to be wholly unfounded. Nevertheless, it would be most unfair to pin on M. Bollaert all the blame for the failure of his mission. For one thing, he was handicapped throughout by the absence of any responsible Non-Viet Minh leader, strong enough to represent his country without being tainted as a French Quisling. For another, French policy in Indo-China in the past three years has often been fumbling and confused. The Along Bay Convention should at least be given the credit of providing a basis for a more comprehensive agreement.

Bao-Dai, with whom the French are now negotiating, is the ex-Emperor of Annam, who may one day return to Hué, his former capital. Thirty-four years old, Bao-Dai is western-educated and a consummate politician. Forced to abdicate following Japan's surrender, he was held by Viet Minh as a hostage and when released went to live in Hong Kong. The French have tried to persuade him to act as mediator between them and the Vietnamese Nationalists. Well aware that time is on his side, Bao-Dai has pitched his terms high. Completely identified with Vietnamese claims for self-rule, he has so far carefully refrained from committing himself to anything. After over a year of periodic meetings between Bao-Dai and Bollaert in Hong Kong, Paris and Geneva, matters seem to have progressed little, if at all. Bao-Dai has made it quite clear that his return to Hué would have to be that of an independent monarch, and not a French puppet. Like his rival Ho-Chi-Minh, Bao-Dai stands for a Viet Nam composed of Annam, Tongking, and Cochin-China, and recognized by France as an independent State, forming part of the Indo-Chinese Federation and of the French Union.

Five years of Japanese occupation and three years of post-war upheavals have had disastrous repercussions on Indo-China's economy. Rich in raw materials, rice, tea, rubber and hardwoods, the basis of her pre-war economy was the production of crops for export to cover essential imports—textiles, food, machinery and cars. Excellent harbours such as Saigon, Tourane and Haiphong, and an extensive network of railways, roads and rivers aided considerably to promote trade and general prosperity. Pnom-Penh, capital of Cambodia, was the chief market for products of Upper Burma, Cambodia and Laos. Saigon, the natural gateway for all north and west-bound imports, was the terminus of the 1,160 miles Hanoi-Saigon railway. Essentially an agricultural country, the

mainstay of Indo-China's economy was the peasant-farmer. Japanese management and depredations seriously disrupted output and distribution, post-war recovery has been considerably impeded by military operations, and the universal shortages of U.S. dollars and skilled labour. According to the French Statistical Service, imports into the French-controlled territories in 1948 totalled 890,000,000 piastres, while exports aggregated only 393,000,000 piastres.*

The fifth rice-producing country in the world in pre-war years, and after Siam and Burma the third rice-exporting country, Indo-China's annual output was 6,500,000 tons, of which 1,584,000 were exported. To-day, exports of it are but a fraction of pre-war, most of the prosperous rice-growing areas being held by Viet Minh. Output of coal and cement—2,335,000 tons and 266,000 tons respectively in 1938—are now back to a sixth and a quarter of their former levels. Rubber production—80,000 tons in 1942—is said to be improving, but exports are still negligible. With a cost of living ten to fifteen times pre-war and a rising level of retail prices, trade prospects for the immediate future are far from encouraging, which seems fantastic in a country with plenty of untapped natural resources. In 1938, Indo-Chinese exports to Britain totalled £419,051, while imports from Britain amounted to £345,650. In 1947, the value of Indo-Chinese exports to Britain was £11,160, that of British exports to Indo-China £1,003,718. Whereas in neighbouring Siam, thirty U.S. firms have opened offices in Bangkok where before the war there was only one, no corresponding phenomena is yet visible in Indo-China.

Quite apart from guerrilla warfare and sabotage, economic problems are further aggravated by the fact that Indo-China's steadily growing population outstrips production in its present state. The industrialization of the country must take place if Indo-China is to hold her own. At present, small industries are being developed for the production of vital consumer goods. The two most disturbing factors—the drawn-out colonial war and the adverse trade balance —have been a heavy drain on Indo-China's slender dollar reserves. This has raised the question of how much longer the rate of exchange of the highly inflated piastre can be maintained if its internal purchasing power continues to decline. The buying rate of the piastre is now 12.55 to the U.S. dollar, the selling rate 12.70. But on the black market the rate is 35 to the dollar. Great hopes are now being placed on the extension of the French "free gold and currency market" to Indo-China. But the general rehabilitation of the country cannot be envisaged until the existing stalemate is ended, normal trade relations restored, and financial equilibrium re-established.

*The piastre is linked to the French franc, the stabilisation being FF. 17=1 piastre.

REFLECTIONS ON THE MIDDLE EAST

By Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen

THE expression " Middle East " is loosely used. India stretches too far in one direction, Turkey in the other. Neither belong to it. India is distinct by virtue not only of her natural wealth, but in the diversity of her peoples, history, religions and traditions, the richness of her soil and verdure, the brilliance of her colouring. Turkey is distinct through her homogeneity, her European interests and connections and because the founder of her National Republic has turned her eyes westwards. Anyone who knows Delhi, Baghdad and Ankara will be conscious of the gulf which separates them.

Essentially the expression covers Persia, Iraq and the Arab countries with Eastern Turkey in very close relation and Baluchistan and Afghanistan displaying a strong family likeness. But, wherever its boundaries, the Middle East possesses something not to be found elsewhere : a peculiar charm and appeal. For myself, I confess I know no other part of the world which inspires the same feeling of nostalgia.

This attraction is difficult to explain and more difficult to define. Perhaps the explanation lies in the contrast with the rush and race of our over-materialistic western life. For with all its modern development, the Middle East happily still keeps more than enough of its traditional character to preserve undamaged its links with far-distant ages.

With us those links are broken. We have devoted vast skill and enterprise to overcome time and space, to get rid of the obstacles which nature has placed in the way of our progress, to eliminate the old and set up the new. What has been the result ? We are less at ease. Our time is more occupied than ever before ; we end our busy day with an uneasy feeling that we have not had time to do properly what we have been able to get through.

Rush and noise are the bane of our existence. The machinery which we have invented is entering into our souls, it is beginning to dominate all our ways of thought, even our relations with one another. It was surely to avoid this very form of slavery that Samuel Butler's Erewhonians rose and destroyed their machines.

In the Middle East there is freedom from all this. There time is no

slave-driver. It is possible to think at leisure, to concentrate without fear of interruption and without feeling that our time will be wasted for us. We can let our minds escape to those great stretches of open country, mountain and plain, whose very bareness, unscarred by human enterprise, gives an impression of age and permanence which is soothing. In our world of progress and upheaval we develop an appetite for anything which suggests repose, continuity and age, or which is now as it must have been for thousands of years. We find consolation in things of the distant past. We collect old furniture, pictures, bronzes, books, china—the older the better. We become enthusiastic over any scene which remains to-day as it was when some historic event took place : we like to feel that some ceremony or custom has been kept up for centuries. Such sentiments prove our desire to escape from our surroundings and refresh ourselves with the thought that we still have something in common with the ancients.

But there is more than this. It sometimes happens in real life, though more often in dreams, that we find ourselves in circumstances or even in places which, though it be for the first time, suggest a strange familiarity. I may be unduly imaginative, but it has always seemed to me that this is the case with the Middle East. We are told that the Iranian Plateau is the cradle of our Aryan race, but our origin lies so far back in time that we can hardly be conscious of it now. Nevertheless, there is something in those parts which gives a feeling that we belong there or at least that we are not strangers. It may be partly due to our childhood's lessons in the Old Testament. We are continually confronted with scenes and modes of life which have not changed for thousands of years. The corn is still threshed as it was in the days of Ornan the Jebusite, men ride on donkeys just as Balaam rode to meet Balak.

Whatever the reason, the Middle East has something about it which leaves lasting memories or perhaps awakes those which have lain long buried in our subconscious selves.

It is a pity that the people of those countries are often prone to deplore this very connection with the past, feeling that it merely suggests that they are sadly behind the times. Their pride is in the evidence of modern progress on western lines. Tourists are frequently discouraged from photographing mosques and ancient buildings and prompted to turn in the opposite direction and point their cameras at the railway station or the new hospital. Pride in such proofs of modernization is intelligible and laudable but I have often feared and not infrequently said that it may be carried too far. The west has much to learn from the east—quite as much as the east from the west. Let us hope that, in following on the lines of our progress, the east will avoid imitating us too closely and never sacrifice its own

national possessions, intellectual, spiritual or even political, in order to import wholesale our institutions and ways of living. Too close imitation led to disaster in Japan, who failed to see below the surface of our material prosperity and entirely misinterpreted it. There is much in the west that is completely unsuitable for bodily transplantation into the east. Plagiarism between one country and another is to be deplored; much more so plagiarism between one continent and another.

I should be the last to deprecate the introduction into less " highly developed " countries of the material advantages to be found in the west. But on two conditions : first, that there be no sacrifice of individuality, for every country has something of its own to contribute to the common good ; secondly, that a due proportion of values be maintained between what is merely material and what is higher. Progress in the west seems to be more and more to the prejudice of the higher values. Life is increasingly distorted into a search for material welfare as an end in itself. The east has for centuries had a different standard and a different appreciation of the relation between things concrete and things abstract. It would be a disaster if this sense of values were lost and if the east were to join us in our race after wealth, ease and comfort, our drift into human mechanization.

Let the east take our inventions and institutions, study them from the point of view of their applicability to eastern life and adapt them to eastern requirements and conditions. But to introduce them merely because they originate in countries which are materially further developed would seem to be unworthy of eastern thought and philosophy. Progress in step with the immensely valuable contribution which the east has to offer to the world is one thing ; progress merely because in the west conditions are supposed to be more comfortable is another.

If the west is essentially the fountain of progress on the concrete side, it is from the Middle East that spring our ideas and beliefs where abstract things are concerned. It is the Middle East which has produced Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, three religions which have overspread a vast area of the earth's surface. Here at least is a common bond. If Palestine be included, the Middle East can be said to be the meeting-place of the ideals and beliefs which inspire the western as much as the oriental world. It is in the Middle East that our religions had their birth and it is there that the struggle between them, the century-old contact and conflict of one belief with another, one temperament with another, one interpretation of life with another is recorded in ineffaceable characters. It is there that Greece, Rome and the Christian west, Ghengis, Khan, Tamerlane, the Turks and other eastern conquerors have passed and left their mark.

It is impossible to travel through these countries without vivid impressions of the depth and variety of historical association which hangs over them, whether it be eastward to Persepolis, Nineveh, Babylon and Ur of the Chaldees: westward to Troy and Sardis, Pergamum and Ephesus or southward with the Crusaders through Anatolia and the Lebanon to Baalbek, Damascus and Jerusalem. And, for a westerner it is Jerusalem which arouses the greatest interest.

But the first impression of the visitor to Jerusalem is not of the common bonds by which time and place have linked east and west. Very much the reverse : it is of the mutual jealousy and distrust which separate them, of the barriers by which each race and religion has surrounded itself, barriers set up not only by the followers of one faith against those of another but by different sects and sections of the same faith.

I suppose that everyone who visits Jerusalem goes there with one predominating wish—a wish to see something which he can feel exists to-day as it existed at the time when his own particular faith originated. If so, and if he be a Christian, he must be prepared for shocks and disappointments. He will find but little and that very superficial. There is so much accumulated débris to clear away, not so much material débris as débris of superstitition, débris of religious emotion, débris of commercial exploitation, even débris of honest devotion, which throughout centuries has piled itself up until the original form and character of the places have been defaced or obliterated. If it is true that the Emperor Hadrian scraped away some thirty feet from the site of Calvary in order to build a worthier shrine, this is typical of the degree in which misplaced piety has obstructed the vision of later generations, to say nothing of the wars and civil disturbances which throughout history have worked so much destruction.

Nor is the visitor helped by the tinsels, gewgaws and other adornments which beset the shrines. It is difficult to believe that anyone can find them a help in carrying his mind back to the realities of the New Testament age. These obstacles are to be found everywhere, though they are perhaps more bewildering in the most central shrine of all. But at the shrine of Calvary there is something more perplexing still. One would have thought that there at least there would be community of worship and community of feeling between Christians of all kinds. But religious jealousies have made two Calvaries. It is the same elsewhere, at Bethlehem for instance.

For all these reasons the Christian visitor is bound to be disappointed ; there is nothing to satisfy his wish. This is the stranger when one thinks how, elsewhere, older monuments of the past survive —the Pyramids, the Acropolis, the Serpent Column in the Hippodrome in Istanbul, the ruins of Persepolis to mention only a very few.

All these date from before Christ, some of them by many centuries, but they survive and speak directly of their own times. No débris of superstition or devotion has collected to obscure these. In Jerusalem there is only one thing visible which satisfies the wish to establish contact with the most ancient times, something which cannot have changed. It is common to all three faiths ; it is not necessary to be Christian, Jew or Moslem to be impressed by it. It is to be found in the Dome of the Rock, in the precincts of what was Solomon's Temple, the scene of so much of the life and teaching of Christ. The beauty and symmetry of that extraordinary building cannot be ignored, and the huge natural rock which it shelters gives the sure conviction of something immeasurably ancient and enduring, which has played a part in the birth of faith in a single deity, and which has witnessed the times when human faith was in its infancy.

The Christian will do better to go to Galilee. The general appearance of the country around the lake has certainly changed, but its chief features remain. There is nothing left of Capernaum but the ruins of the synagogue ; the "coasts of Decapolis " are there but not the ten cities. Nevertheless, the lake, the river and the hills are the same. So must the flowers be. Galilee and the lake are especially favoured in the spring. The deep depression below sea level gives an almost tropical climate in which nature revels. The countryside is literally covered with wild flowers. Nowhere else in the world have I seen such a wealth of colour. The spring flowers in Persia are more scattered, the tulips and irises have a hard soil and a hot sun to cope with. But here the flowers seem to take control and dominate the entire scene.

In these surroundings it is easier to think back. Like the Rock in Jerusalem, the scenery of Galilee gives a sense of reality. The débris of later centuries does not interfere, the New Testament story stands out in clear simplicity. One is tempted to study that life in the light of this reality, by the cold dispassionate historical method, putting aside all suspicion of emotion. It loses nothing, rather it seems to gain. It is at all events more intelligible and nearer. The divinity attributed to the Founder of our faith need not be contested, it seems to affirm itself more strongly by this approach than by doctrines such as the immaculate conception, the virgin birth or even the resurrection in its purely material form. These tend to place Him out of our reach, to separate the divine and the human into watertight compartments with no passing from one to the other. To human beings this can only bring frustration and discouragement. It seems a pity that the curtain of mystery and mysticism is not drawn aside to show Him more often as the *reductio*—or better still the *productio ad perfectum* of the good which is implanted also in our own natures. As to His own nature, it seems to be only a question

of approach. Perfection, whether it be reached by a painful upward ascent, or manifested from above is still perfection. It is a blend of the divine and the human : no one can say where are the beginning and the end.

In the matter-of-fact west the moment for contemplation on these things seldom presents itself and perhaps the inclination even less often. That is one of the differences between west and east and one of the good things the east has to give us.

But to-day even in the east, there is little time for quiet contemplation. In the past those regions have been overrun and swept along by the great tides of world history. So it is to-day and so no doubt it will always be. For the Middle East is just as closely bound up with the interests and policies of the rest of the civilized world as any other part. Perhaps even more closely than some. It stands as a pivot between Europe and Asia, a central point in the network of communications by land, sea and air, the storehouse of some of the most vitally important raw materials, possessing immense economic potentialities. As time goes on, its rôle will become increasingly important. Is it too much to hope that the countries and peoples who compose it will stand together ? There is already a pact—the Saadabad Pact—between Turkey, Iraq, Persia and Afghanistan which provides for mutual consultation. In the west, countries are drawing together into close co-operation. It would be well if the east followed our example. There need be question of nothing save of the economic advantages to the world which such a pooling of reserves and removing of misunderstanding must offer.

(This article is the second of three extracts from the author's book "Diplomat in Peace and War" which John Murray will be publishing later this year. The first extract "An Ambassador's Childhood" appeared in the February issue of THE FORTNIGHTLY.)

"AN ARGUMENT THAT MAN IS FREE"

By Louis Arnaud Reid

PERHAPS freedom of will is not often discussed nowadays except among some of the intelligent young. Nevertheless it is the underlying assumptions of life that condition much of its direction and quality, and there is no doubt, as these articles* suggest, that several tendencies in modern thinking conspire to an assumption that we are victims of forces beyond our control. We are chary of making moral assessments even of ourselves, we look rather for social and psychological "conditioning". Consequently personal responsibility tends to be sapped: in communist places individual freedom and responsibility are openly repudiated. Yet the idea of western democracy is based essentially on responsibility, and the signs are danger signs. As the editorial suggests, "that communism attracts is sufficient proof that man's faith in freedom is less than it was."

The first article puts the problem well. Habits are apt to cramp us and become our masters. Both for the individual and for society it is necessary to stand back from ourselves, reviewing our real needs and tendencies. This is more than ever necessary because of increasing scientific control over human life. The dream of seventeenth century thinkers such as Descartes that in time the increasing knowledge of the laws of nature would enable not only nature, but man's life, to be controlled, seems to be coming nearer realization. Yet, on the other side, educationists are continually emphasizing responsibility, encouraging their pupils to be neither servile to the ideas of others nor indifferent to them.

But what if the possibility of personal initiative is found to be illusion? If indolence or irritability are due to physical conditions, and the more we look into it the more we discover ourselves to be conditioned, does this not make nonsense of the moral and intellectual basis of education? Can we be personally conditioned by our heredity and environment and yet be free? Or again, can personal initiative survive an increase of scientific State planning?

Advancing to the central problem, the second article contends that a very common argument to determinism is fallacious, because based

* *An Argument that Man is Free.* Five articles reprinted from *The Times Educational Supplement.* The Times Publishing Co. 3d.

upon uncriticized analogies of physical bodies and organisms. " Man, it is said, is a material body, therefore his behaviour is explainable wholly in terms of physical laws." This is a crude materialism, held by Hobbes, Voltaire, la Mettrie and others, though not much nowadays. Obviously it does not account for purpose (for example, the intention to jump from a window, as distinct from the mechanics of jumping and falling). Purpose is not identical with mechanics though it is compatible with mechanics, and appears to work through mechanics.

The analogy from organic life is much more engaging, and modern. It runs : " Man is an organism ; therefore he is analogous to other organisms, and his behaviour is wholly explicable in terms of biological laws." This argument is supported by the constantly increasing knowledge of the ways in which our ' minds' (temperament, spirits, intelligence, energy, etc.) are intimately affected by the conditions of our bodies and particularly by our endocrine glands. The reply comes, once again, that the analogy does not hold at the crucial point. If the organic certainly affects our outlook, rational activity in turn can make the body an *instrument* of good or evil purposes.

Here I am bound to say that though these rejoinders may be true, they are in themselves affirmations rather than arguments. Some physiologists would maintain that purpose itself, though so far it escapes physiological definition, may not always do so. The analogy, after all, *may* be perfect. His opponent ought to be able to show not only that there is purpose and rational activity, but what it is and that it is not physiological. A partial step in this direction is the contention that if rational activities are nothing but physical or physiological processes, the theory that they are so could not be *true*, because physically determined. Another argument of great importance is that in physics and in physiology the methods are specialist methods, designed to deal with certain selected physically observable phenomena, but not with characteristically human acts such as purpose and will. These are rightly and necessarily ignored. Naturally, then, these sciences can claim no authoritative right to pronounce upon the nature of human purpose and will.

Another source of belief in determinism is commonly thought to be certain interpretations of history. History is popularly supposed to repeat itself ; it contains trains of causes and effects, and if we can properly analyse present trends, we can go at least some way to predicting the future, confirming an impression of inevitability. But, as the third article shows, the historian's concern with causal relations does not make him so radically determinist as is sometimes thought ; again, from limited history it would be impossible to prove radical determinism, since this would require knowledge of an

infinite chain of causation. History may be written deterministically, or a belief in determinism may effect the writing of history, as with Marx, but the two are independent, as is seen by a brief survey (in the article) of Christian, Whig and Marxist interpretations of history. The great philosophies of history have not, in fact, seriously undermined faith in freedom. (Have not lesser ones ? What of Spengler ?) " The historian's way of influencing opinion is less spectacular but more effective. Machiavelli's *Prince* is not a treatise on the philosophy of history but a collection of political maxims." The historian who uses this technique is introducing analogies advocated by rhetorical methods. This results " in a form of pressure which, while not directly attacking free-will, discourages private judgment."

It is difficult to give a brief and coherent summary of the fourth article on " The Implications of Psychology." The writer begins by citing some of the influences—the theory of the unconscious, new knowledge about heredity, the theory of behaviourism, the findings of the ' ductless glands ' school — upon the belief in determinism. His comment is that these sciences are still young, are not final, and that it is risky to base a philosophy upon them. In contrast to these determinism-tending theories he cites the findings of the 1948 Congress of Mental Health as evidence for the view that human development is not ruled by relentless impersonal law, but is very easily modifiable both in the individual and in society. He takes comfort again from an affirmation (which one would have thought to be extreme) that " in the physical sphere investigations have revealed that temperament depends but little upon physique and ductless glands." These physical factors merely produce tendencies and can be kept in check by environmental influences : the glandular system again has " an intricate compensating mechanism under the direction of the pituitary."

There follow a number of loosely conjoined affirmations, culminating in an approving quotation from Mencius, that the child is naturally ' good '. Attached to this is an examination of the psychological mechanism of the flight from natural ' goodness ', this goodness being seen most perfectly in the reciprocal trust present in the mother-child relationship, which is " the basis of all social behaviour." Through breakdown of this relationship, through misunderstanding, arise fear, aggression, and the sense of false guilt in the child. From these spring various defects of adult behaviour such as inferiority-feeling, escapism, the flight into illness, the finding of scapegoats. The business of the analyst is to restore the natural good feelings of which Mencius speaks. " Psychological truth has made the patient free." Finally we are told that recent psychology has " demonstrated that man is fundamentally a social animal with an innate tendency to goodness which is soon distorted by the

patriarchal pattern of our society."

The first three articles are well knit and firm in intellectual structure: the fourth article, in my view, is disappointing. It is flabby, vague, full of uncriticized assumptions, with little coherence or point. Where one had looked forward with eagerness to a real contribution from the psychologist on the mechanism of freedom, one is offered an ill-assorted handful of half-truths. My comments must be summary.

(1) It is not enough to say of the psychological and physiological determinists that the sciences on which their influences are based are still young. Certainly they are, but their contentions need to be met. (2) The allusion to the cheerful findings of the Congress of Mental Health burkes the issue of freedom. Certainly human nature is modifiable and controllable, but this is a reinforcement of determinism rather than otherwise, *unless* it can be shown that the social scientists who are controlling are themselves genuinely free in their choice of the direction of control. (3) The pituitary controls the glands which are controlled by the emotional centre in the mid-brain. Is this supposed to be an argument for freedom ? It is sheer determination, *unless* the emotional centre in the mid-brain is itself controlled by something which is ' free '. The same criticism applies to the statement that the tendencies produced by the ductless glands can be checked by " environmental influences ", or again that intelligence can sometimes be improved by appropriate treatment.

(4) The affirmation, never criticized, that human nature is innately ' good " is so confused that it would be better left unsaid. Good in what sense ? It would appear to mean morally good. But though the " entirely spontaneous and irrational " relationship of mother and child may be ' natural ', and we may think that everything natural is in some sense ' good ', this is not the same as morally good in any ' thick ' sense of the word. Further, is it not reasonable to think that analytical treatment should aim, not (as the article says) at restoring some alleged pristine state of natural goodness but as building up a fresh and mature personal and social attitude (which might truly be ' good '), a mature attitude which can only be attained through an exercise of free choice ? The writer obviously cannot mean what he says, since any sane psychologist must recognize the difference between the alleged ' goodness ' of the relationship between the infant at the breast and its mother, and mature, far-seeing, social responsibility. But the language is inept. Analytic treatment is to " *restore* ", to " *bring back* ". " Finally, the lost ' good feelings ' of Mencius reassert themselves. . . . The patient's . . . behaviour is *brought back* into the healthy world of freedom." (5) And now " psychological truth has made the patient free." Yes, but in what *sense* free ? Free (or freer) certainly from restraints and conflicts. This is

freedom in one sense, but it is not the " freedom of the will." In this article there does not seem to be even a faint recognition that this question is the central problem of the series.

About the last article I have little to say. It is very brief, and it is presumably intended to sum up the discussion. I did not think that it summed up well, or added anything fresh, and several readings, with no wish to be captious, strengthened my impression of confusion about the relationship between different parts of the article.

Generally speaking, I do not think that the articles as a whole address themselves to the central question. The first two contributions, and, in a different way the third, are good introductions to an important problem. And then nothing happens. Number one puts the question vigorously : " How can one and the same being be both responsible and determined ? " Number two suggests that man's determination can *not* be conceived in terms exactly parallel to the completely determined processes of nature, inanimate or animate. But if not, how *is* human determination and freedom to be positively conceived ? Where is the ' argument ' that man is *free*— and not simply *not* determined like a falling brick or a conditioned organism ? It is nowhere.

This central, positive, problem I propose to allude to briefly. I cannot hope even to state it fully, for it is complex and every affirmation raises many questions. But the existence of larger questions ought at least to be noted.

I begin by distinguishing from " freedom of will " not only what I shall call " radical determinism ", but also " radical indeterminism ". Radical determinism is the doctrine that every one of my acts, including choosing, is wholly accounted for as being caused by a nexus of antecedent events, generally conceived as my physical and mental heredity, environment, past habits, desires, sentiments, etc. What appears to be my present ' decision ' is an exclusive function of past events having a purely natural history. On this view, freedom is illusory. The opposite extreme, radical indeterminism, is a denial that present decision or choice is in any way determined by any event or events that have gone before ; in other words, that choice is uncaused action. This is sometimes expressed by saying that if there appear to be two paths open, then one can go either along one path or along the other indifferently, *the chain of events up to that moment being precisely the same.*

The difficulties of radical determination have been stated. Radical indeterminism, 'uncaused ' action, would seem to land us in sheer chaos or irrationality. Action with no cause whatever behind it is really inconceivable, and even if we can imagine its being conceived how would it help us ? The freedom we seek for must surely admit *some* kind of determination, *some* kind of causality ? Yet the cause must

contain some factor other than those which can be described as within the chain of natural events, or there could not be freedom. This looks like a search for ' free cause '. Is this nonsense ?

This view, which may be called " moderated indeterminism ", or " moderated libertarianism " must not deny the facts upon which radical determinism is based. We *are* undoubtedly subject to a vast range of influences conveniently summed up as ' heredity ', ' environment ', ' past personal history '. It is obvious that I cannot choose *any*thing. I cannot choose to be the conductor of an orchestra if I have no musical gifts. And we are bound to assert, I think, that there must be some lower limit of human intelligence below which we cannot even tentatively speak of freedom of will. A hopeless idiot must be incapable of free choice. Likewise certain diseases (such as sleepy-sickness or any radical affection of the ductless glands) as well as the effects of many drugs, can wither up human capacity, and so freedom.

All the limitations of heredity, environment, and personal history, are, in one sense, limitations of ' freedom '. Yet it seems to me to beg a large question to assume, as is often assumed, that these limitations are limitations of the actual freedom of the will (assuming, *pro tem* that it exists). Let us think of them rather as limitations of range or field or limits within which my will can freely operate. The alternatives between which I choose, the courses open to me, may for various reasons be greatly limited, and the difficulty which I may now find in making or in acting upon a decision, even though in part due to my own past free choices, is also a limitation. But we should beg the question of freedom of will if we assumed without examination that freedom of will is itself *at all* affected by these admitted limitations of field. Furthermore, if we are to say that freedom of will or decision can be reduced to almost nothing by, say, powerfully ingrained bad habits, we shall be denying responsibility, which is dangerous. We should be denying that the person who either breaks with a bad habit, or who continues in it, is fully responsible. Or alternatively we might be driven into saying that ' yielding ' to a strong habit is not free, whilst the breaking of habit is.

If a man is faced with a ' choice ' of being untrue to his principles, or going into a concentration camp, we have no right to assume that if he decides on that difficult choice, this is simply because his character up to that moment was built on lines sufficiently strong. He may not, up to that moment, have been a particularly strong character.* In fact it is by his hard decision that he becomes a stronger character ; if he had not made it, and it had not been hard, he would not be the strong character he now is. Only by taking real decisions does character become strong. Conversely, if ' hard '

* Here, and in what follows in this part of the article I am indebted to two articles by Professor A. E. Taylor in *Philosophy*, July 1939 and January 1942.

choices were really determined, how could they be hard ?

If "moderated indeterminism" denies total determination by previous *natural* events, it also posits a 'free', non-natural factor in decision. This 'free' factor, I suggest, is just the mental detachment of reflection from the casual forward drive of events, the reflective detachment which is an essential condition of the exercise of reason, though it is not identical with reason. If, for instance, I am thirsty and unreflectively and automatically open a bottle of beer from the shelf, I am not exercising choice. But if only for an instant I think, "beer ?" "cyder ?" "water ?" and then go for, say, water, then even although my choice is not deeply or particularly objectively reasoned (and mainly determined by, possibly, my slender purse), it is a free choice. It is so because the decision was caused, not simply by impulsive motive driving me inevitably, but by my detached, if momentary, *judgment* between the alternatives. The fully reasoned moral choice can claim to far greater importance and objectivity than this, but in both cases it is the ability to be reflectively detached which is the essence of freedom of will. Freedom *is* cognitive detachment and contemplation, and free *decision* is free, and is decision, not because it is not the result of anything, but because it is the result of cognitive detachment.

The importance of cognitive detachment and how it means genuine freedom from mere determination by natural events in the past, is best seen when it is the occasion of the mature use of reason. If an arbitrator, of integrity and competence, decides for x, not y, his decision for x is, quite simply, *not* the product of the bias of his character, heredity, environment, natural history, etc., up to that moment. If he is doing his job properly (as we all believe he can) his decision is *not* predetermined. It is not settled until he has thought, until he has reasonably considered the whole situation in the light of reason. We do not properly refer to arbitrators because we think their bias is in this direction or that. The only bias we look for—if bias be the right word—is the bias for truth, fairness, objectivity, and unless, before it is decided, the issue is really open, really undetermined, unless it is arrived at free from one-sided bias, the arbitration would be a farce. This is only a special instance of what every scientist assumes every day.

There is, of course, one sense in which rational processes are natural events. Thinking is a process occurring in time, and psychology can describe it. But thinking also transcends time and natural process, and, in that it does, is not subject to time and is not natural process. The series of logical steps which lead me to conclude that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles is on one side a series of events in time, but each mental event is also the intuitive apprehension of the truth of a logical relationship,

and it is this (to which only its truth, and not any time-sequence, is relevant) which leads to the next step and so to the conclusion. And the whole complex proof, although when stated it has this or that temporal ' natural ' order, is fundamentally of non-temporal order, belonging to the realm of timeless logic, not to causal nature or natural causation. Its truth is in its logical coherence, to which this or that time order is immaterial. If we speak of cause at all here (and in free rational decision) it is a cause which is a *reason* rather than a cause which is a natural event.

The ' cause ' of the arbitrator's free decision is, in essence, his timeless reasoned judgment ; and the like would be true of any mature responsible moral decision—admitting, of course, that the discovery of objective moral truth may be difficult and sometimes unattainable, the result being less perfectly expressive of reason.

I will conclude by making three brief comments.

(1) Mental decision is the condition of a freely willed act, but the mental decision is of course different from the act. *How* a difficult mental decision is carried out into act, what is the psycho-physical mechanism involved in success or failure, I have not discussed.

(2) The power of mental detachment which is the source of freedom of choice is, I am inclined to think, absolute, that is without degree. One has it, or uses it, or not. The *range* of the field of choice is, as we saw, for various reasons limited. And there are various degrees in the excellence of thinking. Yet if there is any thinking at all, its condition must be a detachment which is just detachment, the same for all men whatever their circumstances or ability, provided they are not defective or rendered genuinely irresponsible by disease or other cause.

(3) This has important moral and social implications, for it both takes into full account the limitations (of field) and the difficulties—which are sometimes overwhelming and do overwhelm—of good decisions, and it does not detract one iota from full responsibility. Every man, whatever his status or intellect or psychological history—provided he is *compos mentis*—is free and responsible. We are not to ' judge ' as persons of superior virtue : charity, compassion and intelligent study of the many inclining and limiting forces must enlarge our insight and sympathy and stir our zeal for reform. And knowledge of ourselves should make virtuous condemnation seem indecent. And yet we are not to weaken the holding of ourselves and others to account, to fritter away responsibility, to let charitable sentiment be sentimental, to explain away freedom and responsibility on psychological, sociological, or any other lines.

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THE MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT

By W. T. Wells, M.P.

IN Great Britain, at least, all parties except the Fascists and Communists, and those individuals who subscribe to their doctrines without joining their organizations, are united in seeking to retain the essentials of democracy. The real question underlying the problem of the machinery of government is whether they will be able to do so, and how. Just because of the fundamental agreement between the parties, where this problem is concerned, on aims, the problem is unlikely to achieve spectacular dimensions or to be expressed in dramatic terms ; and the battle is unlikely to be won or lost finally in the lifetime of a single Parliament. It is none the less crucially important, if democracy is to be saved, that it should express itself through the positive action of the ordinary man in co-operating in the tasks of government, and not in a mere negative control. To preserve democracy, we must enrich it, giving it an ever fuller content and meaning.

The problem is clearly divided under two main heads : central and local government. And if the core of it is to make government strong and efficient, in order to enable it to carry out multifarious new tasks, it is evident that one of the first questions to be asked is whether the parliamentary machine is well adapted to bear the strain that modern demands put upon it. It is a question that has often been asked, and many suggested answers have been canvassed. In fifty years, the volume of legislative work that Parliament carries out in a session has increased out of all recognition. It would be wrong, indeed, to take the hectic session of 1945-1946 as being typical ; it is not. But if it be recollected that this admittedly exceptional session saw the passage into law of 83 Public General Acts that included measures of the magnitude and scope of the Coal Industry Nationalization Act, the National Insurance Act, the National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act, the National Health Service Act, the Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers) Act, a great deal of other legislation some of which was very important and some of which was very complex, and two Finance Acts, it becomes clear that the parliamentary machine must in the middle of the twentieth century be capable, at least, of working at a pressure that at the beginning of it would have been inconceivable. Can Parliament, in these circumstances, retain its efficiency either as a legislative body

or perform its traditional function of acting as a vigilant—whether hostile or friendly—critic of the Government ?

To speak of the parliamentary machine is to use a metaphor that has no more validity than any other metaphor. Legislation involves the work of ministers, responsible for deciding what measures to introduce and for steering them through all stages ; of civil servants and parliamentary counsel, who have to prepare the bills ; and of members, some of whom, at least, have to read and digest a considerable amount of literature and correspondence sent them by individuals and organizations affected, before the debates in the House or in committee take place. If any of these groups of persons are seriously and constantly overworked, the quality of their work must inevitably suffer.

1945-1946 was, admittedly, an exceptional session even by modern standards, but there is little evidence even in the easier (in the parliamentary sense) conditions of the present session that there will, or can, be a reversion to the conditions of the 'thirties, which themselves were sufficiently difficult to raise, in what was then considered an acute form, nearly all the problems that have become so much more urgent since. The problem of parliamentary congestion cannot, therefore, be considered as a mere incident of the immediate post-war years, greatly though these have intensified it.

Remedial measures of a more or less technical character are possible. Many have been proposed, and some adopted. Many more bills are referred to standing committees than was formerly the practice ; but this expedient, though useful, is no sovereign remedy because the great issues of public policy are still debated on the floor of the House, a member cannot be in two places at once, and the average member will not like, or regard it as his duty, to concentrate on detailed work in committee to the extent that he loses sight, for a prolonged period, of the work of the whole House. The creation of a large number of small committees is open to the two objections that discussion will not be sufficiently representative and that it will be difficult to maintain a quorum large enough to be appropriate in view of the importance of the work to be done. Curtailment of the right of debate, although useful for limiting deliberate obstruction or tedious repetition, when carried beyond that point defeats the whole object of parliamentary discussion. To increase the number of members, and spread the work more evenly, would probably lower the quality of the House of Commons and would certainly alter the whole character of parliamentary debate ; nor would it conduce to ease what is the more serious burden, that of ministers and their advisers. Finally, the practice of " streamlined bills", which confine themselves to stating principles whilst the details are left to be filled

in by statutory instruments,* whilst useful and indeed indispensable for all emergency legislation and to some extent for normal legislation, is not in general to be commended. The care given to legislation by Parliament, either because of the members' own intervention or because of fear of publicity, is not, and cannot be, normally given to delegated legislation promulgated by the departments that has not been through the parliamentary sieve.

In short, parliamentary institutions have probably been adjusted to modern conditions and demands, except perhaps in minor respects, as far as they are capable of being adjusted without sacrificing the essentials of free debate and of the executive's accountability to Parliament. If further demands were made these essentials would to some extent have to be sacrificed. It is unlikely that, except perhaps in war, greater demands will ever be made by way of major legislation than were made during the gruelling session of 1945-1946 ; but the question is to what extent the advantages of parliamentary over delegated legislation have to be sacrificed in order to leave ministers and private members sufficiently free for duties other than their legislative ones. The first need in this respect is a study of legislative technique at once broader and more exhaustive than any that has yet been conducted in this country.

This question is intimately connected with one that arises as a result of much recent legislation : that is, the political, or in other words, public, control over publicly owned industry. It is possible here to touch on this in only the broadest terms. The general tendency of nationalizing legislation has been to prefer to direct government administration on the lines of the Post Office, an arrangement whereby a public corporation is set up to manage an industry, like the National Coal Board or the Transport Commission, free to conduct its day-to-day operations on its own but subject to directions on matters of policy from the Minister concerned ; or, to take the model of the Iron and Steel Bill, a public corporation owning the share capital of a number of separate companies. These types of organization and the relations with the Government and the public that they entail have several advantages but they also present difficulties of their own. It is the undoubted responsibility of the Minister concerned to ensure that the public have a service that is in general satisfactory, and it is the normal practice to establish an advisory council to keep the Minister in touch with public opinion, but such provision can scarcely do more than touch the fringe of the problem, and the dissatisfied consumer tends to have recourse to his Member of Parliament. The latter, if he tries to ask a question in the House, may find his question either ruled out of order or, at any rate, not answered, on the grounds that it relates not to general policy,

*Normally, subject either to affirmative resolution or to annulment by Parliament.

for which the Minister is responsible, but to day-to-day administration, for which he is not. The practice has been considerably modified of late but the distinction in principle remains ; and while in practice, too, the Member who makes a private inquiry of a Minister is likely to get further than the Member who raises a public question, the whole effect is that parliamentary control remains sporadic and negative, and that Parliament has little means of ascertaining whether the best use is being made of the public monies invested in the industry. Is it possible to establish some control comparable with that exercised over the departments of State by the Select Committee on Public Accounts, so far as past expenditure is concerned, and by the Select Committee on Estimates over future expenditure ? The great difficulty would be to devise a system that gave members sufficient insight into details to make constructive criticism on their part worthwhile without weakening the concept of ministerial authority. Some there are who say that the whole problem of public control over the public corporation is too complex to be soluble, and that, where nationalization is decided on, the Post Office model is the best. It is clear that a great field for inquiry lies open here, and that in the course of the next few years further knowledge of some at least of the questions raised must be gained.

The control of publicly-owned industry is not solely a parliamentary problem. Since such industry inevitably comes under the control of a government department, it comes to some extent under civil servants. Is the traditional type of civil servant, intelligent, highly-educated, incorruptible, but slightly detached from and inexperienced in the strains and stresses of the commercial and industrial world, and better trained for analysis than for action, well adapted for this type of work ? In this connection, a report prepared by a group of the Fabian Society* in 1947 is of some interest :

> At the moment the Civil Service probably comes in for more criticism than any other institution in the country. Much of it is ignorant and ill-directed, but that which is concerned with its size and slowness goes to the heart of the whole matter.
>
> The length of time required to make urgent decisions, the delay in answering correspondence, the complicated and cumbersome apparatus of forms, specifications blueprints and the like which the outside world must employ in its dealings with the Civil Service, are profoundly disturbing alike to the general public and to those members of it who make up this group. The recent increase of government activity has increased these troubles, and we believe that unless they can be solved, there may be only two choices : to agree to less government activity, including planning ; or to watch the economic life of the country gradually slow down. Neither alternative is acceptable. . . .

To some, of course, the former alternative, less government activity, would be acceptable : but whatever any individual's views on this question may be, it is obvious that some such situation as that which has obtained during the war and post-war years may continue, or

**The Reform of The Higher Civil Service*, Fabian Publications and Victor Gollancz. 2s. 6d.

recur, and therefore that consideration must be given to improving the machinery for dealing with such a situation. Numerous recommendations are made by this experienced and expert group ; these cover a wide field, including the widening of recruitment of the administrative grade, broadening of training, better provision for pay and pensions, and some detailed proposals for changes in organization. There seems to be ample scope for a full scale official inquiry into the recruitment and organization of the Civil Service, especially in relation to the new duties imposed upon it.

At the apex of the system of the central government is a small body of ministers. Such of them as are members of the Cabinet or heads of departments, or both, have an immense burden of work and responsibility to carry, for apart from their duties in Parliament, in cabinet committees, and inside their departments, they have to take a share in explaining the policy of the Government as a whole to the country ; which encroaches severely on the week-ends which are for most men a time of leisure. The life of a minister is one of considerable and almost constant strain, and the leading personalities in most governments, including the present, are men over 60, who in almost any other walk of life would be working less hard than in their earlier years. Tired men cannot always be relied on to take wise decisions ; and while it seems very doubtful whether, given our system of government and our national love of detail and fear of general principles, the strain can materially be reduced, the matter does merit serious consideration and investigation. It is a question, for example, whether more independent responsibility could not be given to junior ministers, thus relieving their departmental chiefs ; though for the time being the Belcher case must militate against such a development.

Such are only a few of the outstanding problems involved in the organization of the central government : problems created by the complexity of the tasks imposed upon the machine, the size and intricacy of the machine that has to be devised to cope with the demand, and the difficulty of ensuring that the human mind masters the machine instead of the machine mastering the human mind. Precisely the same problems are to be found, although under different forms, in local as in central government.

In local government these problems take two shapes. There is the relationship of the central government to local authorities ; there is the relationship of the larger local authorities to the smaller. In the first place there is the fact that the central government has assumed responsibility for what were previously local services, such as the hospitals, electricity, gas, and public assistance. Secondly there is the fact that from the point of view of mechanism, at least, the larger local authorities enjoy many advantages over the smaller. They are

able to employ larger, more specialized staffs, with more highly-paid posts at the top, and therefore, on the whole, to attract more efficient employees to their service and to make better use of those with specialized qualifications ; whilst on the other hand, the larger the authority the more remote does it become from the elector, and the more devious are the methods to which he must resort to make his views known or his grievances understood. Thus, with some duties removed and some added, the whole system of local government is in the melting-pot. As the Local Government Boundary Commissioners said in their important and controversial Report for 1947 : " . . . we have come to the definite conclusion that ' effective and convenient units of local government administration ' cannot everywhere be procured . . . without a fresh allocation of functions among the various types of local authorities . . ."

The solution propounded by the Commissioners is well-known, namely, that there should be three main types of local government units—counties, county boroughs and county districts ; the existing counties having more or less the same relationships as at present with county districts, the remaining " counties " being cities and towns with populations of between 200,000 and 500,000 ; the fundamental difference proposed from the present system being that the county boroughs, to be towns of populations between 60,000 and 200,000 should not, as now, be all-purpose local authorities, but what the Commissioners call " most-purpose " authorities. In particular, they propose that the county boroughs should be autonomous local education authorities, autonomous local health authorities, and that they should have detailed, executive duties in connection with town and country planning and certain duties in connection with highways; on the other hand the county, in their view, should be the town and country planning authority, the police authority and the fire services authority.

In themselves these proposals seem logical and sensible. The proposal to put an end to the autonomy of the smaller county boroughs has provoked bitter hostility among those who see in it a threat to their status and independence ; a reaction which is not only natural enough but cannot in practice be divorced from the quite different series of changes which has entrusted a whole range of duties to the nominees of the central government instead of to elected members of local authorities. The members of the latter tend to regard the Commissioners' proposals as part of a carefully concerted campaign to whittle away all power in the country except that of the central government. The new duties thrown upon local authorities in connection, for example, with civic restaurants and the provision of entertainment, clearly show such a suspicion to be groundless ; but although there is no reason to suspect a deliberate attack on the local

authorities, there is some reason to suppose that, without any such intention, the powers of elected representatives of the people have been on the whole diminished. It is a matter of controversy whether such diminution has been healthy or not, but there is no doubt but that many of the nominations to such authorities as hospital boards have given fairly widespread local dissatisfaction, and while much of this has doubtless been manifested by individuals who had wanted to be nominated themselves, and there is in certain respects a good theoretical case for central nomination rather than direct or indirect representation, in practice the latter seems on the whole more satisfactory ; and it is to be hoped that, whenever it may be superseded in the future, as, for instance, in the creation of a national water authority, the process may be less drastic and less complete than in the recent past. The distinction between services of a personal character, such as education, where the need of a close relationship between the user and the provider is admitted, and those of an impersonal character, like electricity, is valid ; but even in the latter a certain responsivenesss to local demands and local needs is not inappropriate. The cause of good government throughout the whole country would be the first to suffer should our local government cease either to be local or to be government.

While it is easy to exaggerate both the urgency and the gravity of the problem, it is none the less true that our political institutions are, in this period of transition from an essentially capitalist to an essentially collectivist society, in a somewhat critical state. It would be foolish to suggest that all economic and social development must stop whilst our political institutions are being overhauled, but yet the need for such an overhaul does exist and should be taken into account by all parties in framing their programmes. It would not be practicable for it to take the shape of a series of royal commissions covering the whole field, but there will have to be a good deal of thought and energy devoted to the solution of the great number of practical problems that are arising and will continue to arise. Further, the problems involved appear to be both so fundamental and so far-reaching that a more specific inquiry is essential in at least two directions : the reform of local government and public control of publicly-owned industry. Indeed, it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that these two were the most important problems in the purely domestic sphere that will confront the next Parliament, whatever party may be in power. And whatever solutions may emerge, it is true now to say that, the more control from the centre may become necessary, the more essential it will be to maintain local government as a genuine and vital force and to devise satisfactory forms of decentralization.

WILLIAM BLAKE

By Herbert Palmer

He wandered up, and he wandered down
Singing a quiet song.
James Thomson of *The City of Dreadful Night.*

HE said you sang a quiet song.
Not often. James was strangely wrong.
Or else, to what does quiet belong ?
He knew not. Now we know.
More like a hundred battle ships
You spoke, the great guns at your lips,
You spoke or sang, and came to grips
With gods for overthrow.

Who listened ? Men were weak, you strong.
You scared them faint with gun and gong
And smoke and fire and thong and prong.
Their world was tired and tame.
The universe reeled in your head,
And every planet blue to red
And foggy white spun round your bed
To put dull dreams to shame.

You smashed church-naves in love and ire,
You smashed the strings of pinchbeck lyre,
You smashed your own ; or why did fire
Of Song at length turn prose ?
Confess, proud murderer, from your throne
That Shakespeare's verse outmatched your own ;
I mean, your loose kind, monster blown
More blank than Arctic snows.

What matter ! You were dove and kite
And lamb and wolf ; black, grey, and white,
A nightingale that sang by night,
A rook the dawn to wake.
But oft we're puzzled. Which was God ?
Which, Satan ? Which just luny clod ?
Which, imp of hate ? Which, Aaron's rod ?
For all were William Blake.

POETS OF MY DAY

By Stephen Gwynn

LET me first define my object—and my subject. The array in which I venture to count myself among the rank and file reached maturity about the close of last century. Maturity for a poet comes earlier than for a writer of prose. I can think of no artist in verse who has not done some at least of his best work by five and thirty, but many famous in prose never gave their measure till they were fairly into middle age.

To put it another way, my day was the day of W. B. Yeats, the most unquestionably acknowledged poet of the group. I name him first because he was the first poet that I knew : he was a young man, or lad, haunting Professor Dowden's house in Dublin, when I, an Oxford undergraduate, used to be there also. It follows that the poets of my day are poets whose work is complete. There are certainly examples of first-rate poetic power carried far into old age—Milton and Tennyson ; but more usually the poet's gift is spent before middle age is over : and except Yeats there was no one of our flight from whom I expected anything new that is memorable. Perhaps even from Yeats I hoped rather than expected it.

That then indicates the period, and it includes a great many names ; but I do not propose to catalogue them—still less to attempt an appraisement. I merely want to give my impression of the contemporaries who most impressed me. Let me however clear away the implication carried by the presence of two veterans on the stage. Mr. Thomas Hardy, as a poet, is from the point of view of publication, my younger contemporary ; he had not published any verse till I was about forty. Of course a great deal of his work in verse was written when the poets of my day were just thinking of being born ; yet when he had grown old, and the European war of 1914 came along, who but Mr. Hardy gave that strong emotion its strongest and most vital expression? I am not going to discuss his work in verse because it is largely unknown to me: only I do not wish it to be thought that I am lacking in deference to the greatest living writer in English—who may quite well rank ultimately higher for his verse than for his prose. This however may be said in passing. Technically as a writer, Hardy lacks charm, and in verse he is positively clumsy ; the medium of his thought and feeling lacks

he attractiveness which so many lesser writers can give to verse or to rose. But what you get from him is that without which there can e no great poetry—the vibration of a whole nature. And what ibrates with him conveys the sense of something immensely strong, ar-reaching, not easily shaken, and when it is stirred, profoundly noving in its resonance.

My other veteran is the Poet Laureate, Robert Bridges, whose echnical accomplishment was of course very distinguished. But what I miss in him is precisely what I feel in Hardy—this vibration. I met him when I was young, and in a rather self-consciously high-brow coterie his brow was much the highest, and most austere. I thought him donnish then—with the donnish inhibition, always afraid of giving himself away—and perhaps with the donnish value for what might then pass out of his keeping. Except for one triolet his work never said anything to me, and in that admirable little poem there is really the note of passion :

> We never guessed when first we met
> That love could be so hard a master—

But you do not put your passion into so artificial a medium as the triolet unless you are irretrievably a don.

I come back to my contemporaries—the people of the Rhymers Club whom Yeats has praised, and who will survive in anthologies—not a bad way to be remembered ; lucky are those who attain to it. I am not sure but that one of the most remarkable writers I ever knew, Maurice Hewlett, and he wrote some eight or nine volumes of verse, may as a poet miss even this form of lasting recognition. Possibly his " Village Wife's Tragedy " may come to the top among the litter of war poems and it was certainly among the few good ones. Laurence Binyon I cannot place ; good as he is, is he quite good enough ? Is there the driving force to animate his accomplished volumes ? Francis Thompson some years ago would have been set down confidently as a poet sure to live. If I never derived any great pleasure from his works, I thought the fault was in me. Herbert Trench, far less known, has written one or two things which I think at any time will delight any lover of verse ; and I would not say that about Thompson. But I am falling into the catalogue.

I come then to the first of those about whom I can speak more definitely—the poets of my day who for me have meant most. I never knew A. E. Housman, though I constantly met his brother Laurence who has written so much more than he in verse and much of it admirably. The outstanding fact about A. E. Housman was his donnish seclusion. One of my sons attended his lectures on Latin and found him dry as dust—or dry as Browning's " Grammarian ". The

only other living soul I know who ever spoke to him was another and a very different professor. From him I gathered that in the controversies between scholars no one threw a fiercer stone than Housman and in the matter of throwing stones or having them thrown at him, I accept Professor Henry as a judge. But the poet is a separate entity from the scholar—and a very queer one. A. E. Housman published two volumes of verse with roughly speaking a thousand lines in each, consisting in all of some sixty lyrics. Nobody else of importance has published anything like so little and if any of his work survives—which I take as certain—the whole will. His life was spent in London which he loathed, and in Cambridge which completely shut down his poetry ; but he is a bucolic poet of a definite countryside, that Shropshire county which he perpetually haunts in memory and whose names—Clunton and Clunbury, Clungerford and Clun, with the rest of them—he has made part of our memories too. He was perhaps not exactly of my day, for I suppose he graduated at Cambridge a year or so before I went to Oxford : but the earliest poem of his that we have is dated from the Jubilee year, 1887. He was twenty-eight then. But his work really dates from several years later. " I can no longer expect," says the Foreword to his *Last Poems*, " to be revisited by the continuous excitement under which I wrote the greater portion of my other book, nor indeed could I well sustain it if it came."

From 1896 to 1910, when he was moved from London to Cambridge, he wrote intermittently. And once Cambridge had him, he wrote no more, till the spring of 1922 when something stirred that had lain torpid in him, and he wrote about a quarter of the second volume. These I presume are the poems which have to do with the 1914-1918 war and express emotions long accumulated and suddenly let loose. It is characteristic that almost half of his entire output spurted out in two sudden bursts of impulse, separated from each other by more than quarter of a century. For all his reticence, for all his severe restraint of form, he is one of the poets in whose work emotion is most vibrant. The pessimism which marks him suggests an affinity to Hardy ; each man is far more conscious of night dogging day than of dawn perpetually chasing darkness. You miss in Housman the large sweep and swing of the other bucolic poet ; the nature which vibrates has not such potency. In Hardy it seems as if the chords which echo were stretched across some vast moor. But in Housman language and rhythm are handled with the last perfection of skill and he is going to be remembered because hardly any one else is so easy to get by heart. He can take the simplest stanza and make of it something entirely his own : or, by a deft alteration of some common form, he can achieve something novel and delightful—for instance in the poem which all know about

the bells on Bredon.

Free verse has a good deal to recommend it but I question whether all these advantages are not outweighed by one consideration. It sacrifices the aid to memory. Rhyme holds words in their place as if you had pegged them there : a strictly recurring rhythm is almost equally fixative. What you write in regular verse, if it is good enough, will be remembered word for word, perhaps by a few, perhaps by hundreds, possibly thousands : but what page of prose can anyone repeat by heart ? Sir Sidney Colvin, an old scholar and critic, with sight failing him, sleep leaving him in a great trouble, said to me that his best stand-by was in the couple of thousand lines of good poetry that he could say over to himself. No one will owe that sort of gratitude to the *vers libres*—even when they condescend to appeal to the ordinary sense of rhythm—or, for that matter, to any common sense at all.

I do not mean to discuss Kipling at any length. His is one of the two-handed talents using prose and verse, as Scott did : and there is no doubt in my mind that verse is his left hand. I put nothing of his in verse beside *Kim*. But heaven forbid that I should deny the immense pleasure which his *Barrack Room Ballads* gave me, and can still give. Things like " Ford of Kabul River " and the " Old Moulmein Pagoda " are works of genius ; yet not better than some of his sea-chanties. Kipling's influence on the verse writing of his day has been far reaching and I have never seen any recognition of one of the chief sources from which he draws. A friend of mine began to re-handle negro folk-song for a little play called *Brer Rabbit* and I saw at once how much Kipling owed, for lilt and rhythm and even for atmosphere, to the plantation melodies.

And I am not going to talk about the local Irish poets—except perhaps a word about Moira O'Neill, who has given so much pleasure with the *Songs* of her youth and the " Glens of Antrim ". I am not going to try to assess one whose influence has been incalculable. Neither do I intend to deal at any length with Yeats. His position is too well settled, and the lank wisp of a boy whom I knew first fifty years ago in Dublin is now a European reputation ; his Nobel prize merely stamped definitely what was before ascertained. No poet upheld the dignity of his craft more consistently than this Irishman. He lived poor, and as reputation grew, he never yielded to the temptation of earning easy money by exploiting his notoriety. There was never a more scrupulous artist. Speaking of a man with whom I was in touch all through his working life, yet always without intimacy, I can say that the most characteristic thing I knew of him was his fight for artistic liberty when another man's work was at stake. The Irish National Theatre after a long struggle was just becoming popular when an uproar was created about Synge's

Playboy. Yeats from the first had rated Synge's work as everybody rates it now ; but Synge had then never become popular. People came to Yeats and said : " We like your work, Lady Gregory's work, Boyle's work, and other people's but we don't care about Synge, and he offends the public. Don't ruin your enterprise for the sake of one man. Throw him over." Yeats said : " I will not throw over good work at the bidding of a mob " and he fought it out and won. That was a very high kind of courage. Poets also have to be tough.

The other man of whom I have to speak—the man with whom I am chiefly concerned—came to a tragic end just because he lacked this toughness—this resisting fibre which helps to carry on in spite of obstacles, disregarding unpopularity on the one hand and on the other the prospects of cash reward. He is Stephen Phillips, the best of whose work I rate higher than that of any man since Tennyson—and the estimate of whom so suddenly and so uncritically changed.

I met him first in 1897, I think along with his cousin and friend Laurence Binyon. He had just come to London to try his luck ; so had I. *Christ in Hades* had been published, in a tiny volume. It showed not only his obvious debt to Tennyson but (for a close critic) that allegiance to Milton which was fundamental. In technique Milton was for him the unapproachable master. But at the same time the *Spectator*, then directed by old Hutton, was publishing work by Phillips quite other in kind—the " Woman with the Dead Soul " and the " Window ". These things then seemed ultra-modern—even in their technique. People complained that he took great liberties with the ten-syllable verse. What I want to note is that Hutton, a fine judge and a sincere mind if ever there was one, was immensely taken by this new force in poetry, and not so much by the academic Tennysonian idyll as by the studies from the underworld. From the first there was this duality : a young man writing in the stateliest tradition of English verse, but at the same time choosing his subjects from the women of the street. When in 1898 he published his first volume of poems, the " Woman with the Dead Soul " stood first in it. It had never the popularity of " Marpessa", a mythological piece which can stand beside the best of Tennyson's classic idylls and gain by the comparison. It was faulty and in places obscure, but it rose here and there to an intensity of beauty which few ever attain. Listen to this in the story of the gin drinking woman who had drunk her soul to death :

> " No sound shall rouse her now," I said,
> " Not even the special whisper that restored
> Pale Lazarus ; yet will she seem to run
> And hurry eager in the noonday sun,
> Industrious, timed, and kempt ; till she at last
> Run down, inaccurate, aside is cast."

The success of that volume was instant and it was accidentally heightened. *The Academy*, then a literary review of note, offered a prize for the year's best book of verse to be awarded by some competent jury and Phillips' book was chosen. Any book would have been helped, but the chance was that this offer was made in the year when a work of wholly exceptional merit appeared. There was no appreciable set back to the current of praise, and it came most decisively from the best critics—from Frederick Greenwood for instance. A little money came in, but only a little. Phillips had a wife ; they had met when both were minor members of Benson's theatrical company and their marriage had been in every sense imprudent. Their first child had died ; a second was born not long after this date. And the trouble was that Phillips could write verse and could write nothing else. *The Spectator* people tried to give him work in prose, but he neither could nor would do it. Still, apart from the money anxiety, he was happy enough at this time, living in a sort of artisan's cottage on the edge of London. I used to go down a good deal and we played cricket together—though we were by no means in the same class. He would have been, if he had played steadily, good enough for almost any side, either as bat or bowler. But it was not like him to settle down to what you might call academic cricket.

In everything he abhorred the respectable and he adored low company. Dickens was his author and he wanted even cricket to have its humour. The thing for which he was remembered in Benson's company was his passion for practical jokes; the moments he recalled with delight were occasions when in playing the Ghost in *Hamlet* (the only part in which he succeeded) the sliding platform which moved him majestically off stuck fast and Benson in the intervals of Hamlet's speeches said a great deal not meant to cross the footlights. He was never an actor by temperament, though he acquired many of the actor's habits ; neither he nor his wife could sit at home of an evening. But when he asked me one day if I would collaborate in a play, I laughed and said I did not know which of us was least fitted for it. I did not allow for the experience which stage life had given, but essentially my instinct was right.

He was familiar with stage technique and tradition, which he allowed to override him. But he was never really a writer for the stage. The best of his work could have been put as effectively or more effectively into some Miltonic or Tennysonian form. Dialogue is essential to it but only as it is essential to Milton and at times to Tennyson.

CORRESPONDENCE

Is Germany being democratized ?*

To the Editor of THE FORTNIGHTLY.

Sir,

After the collapse of the Third Reich the Allies were confronted with the necessity of replacing the hated Nazi doctrine. Since the Russians thought it convenient to paint their ideology ' democratic ', too, the word ' democracy ' was from then on lavishly used and all political parties, clubs, and societies described themselves as democratic institutions. Though nobody was able to express the exact meaning in concrete terms—because the Soviet and the 'western' interpretations run counter—everyone thought this term ' democracy ' had been brought into common usage to inaugurate a new era free of the evils of Naziism.

In pursuance of their policy to uproot militarism and Naziism, Allied officers regarded as their foremost duty the arrest of members of the party, State officials and civil servants. But often no specific charges were brought forward against those imprisoned. People bearing personal grudges against a neighbour who happened to be a party member denounced him to the occupation authorities and the accused was soon transferred to an internment camp. Because the camps had often been hurriedly erected conditions were sometimes unpleasant. The inmates waited even as long as two years until being summoned before a denazification court where they were told of the precise charges against them. This time of separation often punished the detainee's family more than himself because his wife and children were sometimes dependent on public welfare aid. Returning he often found himself homeless, since his house had been confiscated by the Allied authorities.

The occupying authorities have still the right to imprison anyone for an indefinite period without divulging or being compelled to divulge the reason for this arbitrary arrest. They can force people to abandon their homes, giving them sometimes only 24 hours to leave. They are only allowed to take their personal belongings with them. All kinds of furniture, beds, china, cutlery are taken over by the new occupants. Though the German proprietor is normally left the owner of his premises he is unlikely to find his flat in the same condition as he left it because very often it will have passed through several hands before it is given back to him.

The German press had virtually ceased to exist in 1945 and the Allies built up a new one on the system of licences. This means that two or three trustworthy anti-Nazi Germans were allowed to edit a paper or a periodical but only on the understanding that criticism against the occupying power issuing this licence would automatically lead to the withdrawal of it. Therefore it could happen, for example, that no paper in the American zone would dare to criticize the colour bar in the U.S.A.—which is always under attack from the papers in the Soviet zone. A typical example of this deliberate policy is the uncompromising anti-communist American-licensed *Tagesspigel* in Berlin in which you will never find an anti-American sentence expressing the political ideas of German writers. Goebbels answered each deviation of a journalist from the official party line by forbidding him to carry on his profession and it was extremely difficult for those punished to find another job. This would be true, too, of any German writer of to-day who—in order not to arouse the anger of his superiors—is at pains to avoid serious criticism of the occupation policy. Many topics which would especially interest young Germans are entirely excluded from discussion—a measure which has led quite a few intelligent Germans to wonder

* The title of Werner Levi's article in the January 1948 issue.

whether this is a deliberate silencing policy.

Among these forbidden topics is the fate of those writers who, under the Nazis, often quite incidentally had had political capital made out of their writings. Very few people in Germany know whether Hans Grimm, E. G. Kolbenheyer and Wolfram Brockmeier are still alive or where and under what circumstances they live. If there are any charges to be brought against Hans Grimm then they should be uttered and he should be allowed to defend himself ; this policy of hushing up perhaps looks like a silly copy of Hitler's ban against Thomas Mann, Stefan Zweig and Heinrich Heine.

Other subjects which must not be written about are the underlying principles of the Allied policy of obliteration bombing, the extermination of four million Germans in the eastern provinces, and the priority given to certain categories of people in the monetary reform.

It would be a mistake to assume that the currency reform brought the black market to a standstill. Only the prices have changed and the grafters try to underbid the official ones. Twenty American cigarettes cost 6 DMarks but on the black market you may get them for 5.50 Dm. These transactions take place under the very eye of the American Military Government, which only seldom interferes to arrest a few of the major offenders. In view of the fact that these dealings are often carried on by Jewish D.P.'s this is unlikely to lessen anti-Semitism in Germany.

The activities of the somewhat artificially resuscitated political parties were limited to a rather narrow field because all the important political issues are quite naturally dealt with by the military authorities. The parties, therefore, lacking to a great extent their *raison d'être* engrossed themselves in questions of little practical value, becoming the targets of wisecracks in cabarets. The same is true of the limited power of the Laender, for it remains quite unintelligible, why the government of Hesse has been allowed to pass a bill for the nationalization of some vital industries if the U.S. Military Government finally forbids this to be carried out.

The characteristic feature of the three years before the monetary reform was the complete lack of the bare necessities of life such as soap, bulbs, shoe-laces, nails—the only item obtainable without difficulty was salt—and the wholly inadequate rations. In order not to starve every German was compelled to have his share in the black or grey market. A civil servant, however, who earned 400 marks per month could not afford a lb. of coffee at 300 marks and a suit at 3,000.

These conditions proved to be ideal hunting grounds for foreign spivs. An American G.I., who bought, say, 1,000 cigarettes for $8 could sell them on the black market for 6,000 marks and buy two first class suits or three good wrist-watches. This impoverishment of Germany, that is, the bartering of cheap consumer goods for expensive real values such as jewels, cameras, pictures, gold and silver has outlived the currency reform. Only the prices have changed. Though every German knows about these dealings, no paper will ever write a line about it for fear of losing its licence.

The discrepancy between the prodigal abuse of the word democracy in the press and its importance in everyday life can hardly escape the observation of the reader. He reads his paper only because he feels he cannot afford to live without news in a world like ours. But at the bottom of his heart he not only distrusts but despises his press.

The war criminal trials, intended to be a step towards the re-education of Germany are now one of the chief stumbling blocks. Bishop Wurm's protests and the disclosures in some American papers of the methods used against the defendants made many Germans believe that these trials were more inspired by feelings of hatred and revenge than by a genuine desire for justice. The intricate problem of guilt and atonement in the political sphere cannot be solved simply by hanging and imprisoning the generals of the vanquished people.

Audiatur et altera pars. This basic right being denied to me I am compelled to state my case in Great Britain. I sincerely hope you do not interpret this letter as a proof of ill-will. I have written it because I feel that real peace among the nations can only be brought about by a mutual interchange of thoughts and ideas.

Yours faithfully,
HANS GERHARD CREMER.

Glasgow.

(*The writer, the son of a Minister of the German Evangelical Church who was imprisoned by the Nazis, served with the German Army and after a period as a prisoner of war is a student at Glasgow University.*)

TOO MUCH COMMUNISM IN YUGOSLAVIA

To the Editor of THE FORTNIGHTLY.

Sir,

Mr. Peter Schmid in his interesting January article complains that Yugoslavia is developing her communist economy too fast compared with the other People's Democracies of eastern Europe. He names Hungary. This country occupied the Yugoslav grain-producing areas during the war, exterminating several thousand Serb peasants by simply drowning them in the Danube at Novi Sad.

He says that the impact of all-out nationalization is easily discerned by the transient visitor, but makes no mention of the extent of the material damage caused by the Yugoslavs' fight for independence. Their resistance against the Axis was carried on at the same time as the revolution led by a minority of communists. While massacres of whole village communities became a common feature—as also the German liquidation of thousands of Serbs, Jews and Slovenes in the Banjica and Saymishte concentration camps on the outskirts of Belgrade where the ruins were quickly pulled down—the majority of peasants united not only to rid their country of invaders but also to find unity in the country as a whole. Lack of unity in the past had been the cause of intrigues being continuously fomented by neighbours ready to seize good arable land and minerals. Obviously in a country 30 per cent. forest and 50 per cent. rock of which 20 per cent. is limestone, not even the communists of Marshal Tito could have exploited a national programme of unity without the support of peasants naturally skilled in guerrilla warfare and endurance—a fact surely appreciated by Marshal Tito and his associates who know well that guerrilla fighting is most successful in mountainous and forested districts, particularly against enemies modernly equipped. Any government in a country left at the end of the war with seven different currencies would have to consider nationalization as well as industrialization to assist in maintaining unity and to raise the standard of living in the isolated country districts before that of the towns where tradesmen in the past had been largely foreigners.

The big towns such as Zagreb and Belgrade lie within reach of the fertile areas along the Sava and the Danube which are most open to attack and foreign intervention. If German technicians laugh at their tragi-comic employers who have only brief experience as engineers and civil servants they should remember 1941 when inefficiency was no criterion of a Yugoslav pig-herdsman's loyalty and grit. Convalescence is frequently accompanied by grumbling, boasting, and hysteria ; and justice is uneven in the tedium of progress, with the attendant evils of upheaval. It speaks volumes for Yugoslav reconstruction if only the cruelty of mistakes is noticed in 1949 and not the difficulties which were so apparent to the transient visitor touring an adolescent country in 1945.

Yours faithfully,
ANNE DACIE.

London, S.W.15.

H. E. BATES'S WAR STORIES

By Joseph Braddock

FEW people who follow contemporary literature would, I think, either deny that H. E. Bates is one of the finest living writers we have, or that his career as a story-teller has been remarkable. Since Edward Garnett first discovered his genius at the age of eighteen and beginning with a novel, *The Two Sisters*, of great charm and poetic sensibility, he has gone on pouring out a fecund stream of short stories, novels, and country essays, as well as giving us a book of criticism on the modern short story and a successful war play, *The Day of Glory*.

Mr. Bates has always been a prolific writer, with a varied and expanding range of subject matter. Averaging more than a book a year, it is hardly surprising if his work has not uniformly kept to his own highest level ; but there is perhaps another reason than his wealth of output for this. He has never stopped experimenting. Commendably unwilling merely to repeat his past successes, he has ever looked for fresh artistic worlds to conquer ; and in order to break new ground has occasionally been obliged to retreat, *reculer pour mieux sauter*, as I believe he did in *Spella Ho*, for example, a book useful possibly less for its intrinsic merits than for what the experience of writing it enabled its author later to do.

How fine are some of the pre-war tales of the English countryside, in opulence of observation, in delicacy, sometimes in almost sensual, naked strength—*The Poacher*, *The Ox*, *A Threshing Day for Esther*, *The Mill*, *The Bridge*, *The Bride Comes to Evensford*, to choose at random, besides those exquisite prose poems of only a few pages, like *Death In Spring*, *A Flower Piece*, *Fishing* ! In top form H. E. Bates challenges comparison with the best, with Maupassant, Hemingway, and D. H. Lawrence. Then there is his comic Muse. Surely *My Uncle Silas*, the exploits of that extra-vital, delicious old rural reprobate, is already a minor classic, for Silas himself is in the main line of English comic characters, through Falstaff and Tony Lumpkin.

But the war came and everything changed. In the R.A.F., as " Flying Officer X ", Bates wrote admirably of what he had absorbed of the hourly endurance and heroism of the crews of bombers and fighters in *The Greatest People in the World* and *How Sleep the Brave*, moving, restrained stories subsequently reprinted together under the title of *Something In The Air*. He was deeply affected by what he had seen. Later, his experience, his indignation at war's stark crazy inhumanity flowed over into his play, and much of his compassion also into his romantic novel of escape, *Fair Stood the Wind for France*, simply but beautifully told, with a new enhanced tenderness in the love story. For here he had expressed, among other things, the plight of a whole generation of young people caught up in the impersonal machine of war. He had been to Burma ; but before the two Burmese novels, *The Purple Plain* and his latest *The Jacaranda Tree** just published, came a magnificent long short story, *The Cruise of the Breadwinner*, which I unhesitatingly claim as a masterpiece of his creative imagination, ghastly in its realistic picture of the machine-gunning of a small patrol fishing-boat, yet because of its spirit of youth and indomitableness likely to rank with the greatest of English sea stories.

The Purple Plain is a fine book, convincing, moving, and exciting, though perhaps divided into imperfectly fused parts. The love of the

* *The Jacaranda Tree*, by H. E. Bates. Michael Joseph. 9s. 6d.

hero for an educated Burmese girl is lyrically treated ; there are the themes of horror—the unexpected bombing of a Burmese village—and again of escape. Mr. Bates's war experience has changed him as a writer, maturing him suddenly and transforming his style from its earlier sensuous quality to, at times, a shocking starkness, a stripped incisive prose. It has enabled him also to project service relationships with the appropriate idiom nearly perfectly, whether between men and men or men and nurses.

While *The Purple Plain*—at any rate the first half—gave me the impression of growing naturally, organically like a tree, *The Jacaranda Tree* (confirmed by a second reading) alas, felt somehow too contrived and made me think absurdly of a bird-cage from which the bird is missing. The heat, the physical, menacing, extreme beauty of Burma have driven deeply into Mr. Bates's soul, and these he reproduces with verve and with every device of the born story-teller to hold our excitement to the end. Yet there seems something lacking.

The tale is of two car-loads of incompatible, for the most part rather tawdry, people trying to escape north to India before the threat of Japanese invasion in 1942. They are led by Paterson, the manager of a rice mill, accompanied by his boy, Tuesday, and Nadia, his lovely Burmese mistress. There is a Major Brain and a Eurasian nurse who turn back and with the "batty" Mrs. Betteson—a most striking, successful character—save their souls. The other characters (four of them die in circumstances of horror) are presented firmly but are perhaps too close to colonial types and drawn each on a single plane. Although Mr. Bates's preoccupation with more, and new, characters represents certainly his continued development as a writer, neither his theme nor his treatment of these near-conventional people seem sufficiently important to add to his stature as a thinker. Not that a great writer need be a thinker in the sense that Huxley, far less Lawrence (thinking with the blood) are thinkers, but only that we require to feel *implicit* behind the work his comprehensive philosophy of life. Mauriac could be an example. The weakness of an agnostic point of view for the novelist is, perhaps, that it diminishes the importance of the individual : unless his characters are very sympathetically, or deeply, drawn, the reader may begin to stop caring what happens to them.

Nevertheless, if *The Jacaranda Tree* disappoints in the least, it is only when against the highest standards. To say that Mr. Bates has not yet written a *Nostromo*, neither at all detracts from his new book's lavish merits, nor says that he will not do so.

MR. PRESIDENT, by Maurice Ashley. *Jonathan Cape*. 21*s*.

Of all the offices in modern democratic States none offers so glittering a prize, so lonely an eminence or so heavy a burden as the Presidency of the United States. So remarkable an office, so curiously conferred, has long had a fascination for foreign observers, and Mr. Ashley, a historian distinguished for his penetrating studies of that most nearly presidential of all British epochs, the Cromwellian Protectorate, is the latest to fall beneath its spell. " Attracted ", as he says, "by the extraordinary institution of the Presidency, I have ventured to recall and repeat a part of the American story by summarizing the lives of six American Presidents who, it seems to me, are among the fascinating figures of history." Through this medium, semi-biographical, semi-institutional, he has sought to convey what he calls his " discovery of America ", made when in 1944 he set foot in the United States for the first time as a military intelligence officer.

The medium Mr. Ashley has chosen is both inviting and somewhat recalcitrant. [Even though great men, *pace* Lord Bryce, are often chosen President, their incidence has been rather uneven

in relation to the flow of American history, and even the institution of the Presidency itself has not been exclusively dependent for its development on the great incumbents. Consequently what Mr. Ashley's book is most effective at presenting are these climaxes in which the man, the office and the event combine together, like some great orchestral *tutti*. Fortunately, American history is rich in such dramatic moments, and Mr. Ashley, like the skilful conductor he is, has taken the best advantage of his opportunities. Nothing could be more readable than his account of Washington's generalship in the War of Independence or Lincoln's handling of the Civil War.

His choice of subjects was almost settled for him, once the decision had been made to restrict himself to six and to omit Franklin Roosevelt as too nearly contemporary, but the balance between them could not have been more evenly held. If, by comparison, the non-biographical themes of American history have been somewhat slighted, that is probably an inevitable price to be paid, and readers whose appetite has been whetted by this introduction can go elsewhere for an analysis of the tangled issues of the War of Independence and a fuller exposition of the provisions and implications of the Constitution.

Only on one small but important point could Mr. Ashley's fluent narrative have been filled out with advantage and within the bounds of his self-imposed limitations : more emphasis might have been laid on the significance for Lincoln of his conviction that, despite the fundamental immorality of slavery, he had no right to interfere with the institution in those states which had chosen to exercise their right to maintain it—for that is the clue to many of his actions which must otherwise seem bewildering to the English reader. And surely, on page 318, it was Nemesis that befell Theodore Roosevelt, not Hubris ?

H. G. NICHOLAS.

PARLIAMENT AND FOREIGN POLICY IN FRANCE, by John Eldred Howard. *The Cresset Press.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Howard gives a concise analysis of the constitutional arrangements for the initiation and fulfilment of foreign policy, which prevailed in France during the period of the Third Republic. His work is particularly concerned with the years from 1919 to 1939, but it also covers the general historical development of political theory and practice from the time of the French Revolution.

Following its presentation as a thesis for the degree of Bachelor of Letters at Oxford, his book was revised, and if the war had not intervened, it would have been published in 1940. Mr. Howard has therefore suffered some disadvantage, in view of the changes which have taken place since that time. He has decided, however, not to make radical alterations in the text in order to bring it up to date. That decision must be considered as well justified, since his purpose was to investigate the functions of government, and the mechanism of foreign policy, rather than to record the actual sequence of events. His study therefore maintains its validity as a well documented account of the degree of control over foreign policy exercised by the legislative assemblies and their expert committees, and ultimately by the somewhat remote influence of public opinion.

The author says that if he were rewriting his book, he would lay more stress on the cleavage between the left and right parties in France, but that otherwise he would find little to modify in his original conclusions. On this point in particular, it may seem that Mr. Howard is still inclined to overestimate the degree of national unity which he considers to have prevailed in France at the outbreak of war, for in his introduction he speaks of " the leaders of the Communist Party and of a few Fascist groups " as " negligible elements whose influence over even their own nominal followers was by no means complete." In the text itself,

Mr. Howard twice refers to this supposed unanimity of public and parliamentary opinion in 1939, and his brief comment in a footnote concerning the dissolution of the Communist Party and the arrest of its members is barely adequate by way of modification.

Mr. Howard also relegates to a footnote a short reference to the action taken by the Senate in twice overthrowing the Blum government ; he takes a rather limited view of the powers of the Upper Chamber, and does not emphasize sufficiently the ability of the Senators to obstruct legislation.

It would have been interesting to have more information about the character of the external diplomatic representation of France, and about the tendency in recent years for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to conduct negotiations, openly or secretly, outside the ordinary channels—a development of course which has been occurring in other countries as well. These points are mainly matters of emphasis, and Mr. Howard's study must be praised as a clear exposition of an intricate and unfamiliar subject.

CHARLES GOULD.

CIANO'S DIPLOMATIC PAPERS, edited by Malcolm Muggeridge. *Odhams.* 17*s.* 6*d.*

In an article : " Don Samuel and the Caudillo " (THE FORTNIGHTLY, September 1946) I had the temerity to disagree with Lord Templewood's estimate of his own achievement in Spain by suggesting that General Franco was all the time determined that his country should not be involved in hostilities and therefore that the Caudillo's aims and those of Sir Samuel Hoare were substantially the same. Embarrassingly, this article met with the approval of General Franco's most promising young lieutenant, José María Areilza, who quoted it extensively at the beginning of a book entitled *Embajadores Sobre España.* There is now some compensation in Ciano's *Papers,* which reveal with absolute finality that the Caudillo never had the slightest intention of allowing Hitler or Mussolini to bully or cajole him into war.

The memoranda contained in this volume deal with many of the principal international manoeuvres of 1936-1942 and cover some two hundred conversations in which Ciano participated, or which were minutely reported to him. Among the latter, are the discussions which occurred between Grandi, Neville Chamberlain and the British Foreign Secretary in 1938—an encounter in which Mr. Eden displayed courage, integrity and sound judgment. All the European big-wigs of the time make their appearance. It is notable that most of them are now dead ; some, indeed, are almost forgotten—names such as Beck and Stoyadinovitch, for instance, call forth but faint memories to-day. This sorry gang of a dozen or so individuals imagined that it controlled the destinies of Europe. In reality, Europe was painfully working its way out of an antiquated social order, and the megalomaniacs and spivs who thought they were creating the new order were mere instruments in bringing about the chaos that has to precede ultimate continental unification. But it is not the function of diplomatic documents to present day-by-day events in the light of eternity.

The reader who has forced his way through these 484 pages will be willing to concede that Ciano, though he was incompetent and excessively self-satisfied, was nevertheless not entirely repulsive. He was a man of energy and some charm who was tempted to " have a go " in a big way, and had it.

GEORGE PENDLE.

THE DURABLE MONUMENT : HORATIO NELSON, by Admiral Sir W. M. James, G.C.B. *Longmans, Green.* 15*s.*

HITLER AND HIS ADMIRALS, by Anthony Martienssen. *Secker & Warburg.* 15*s.*

The naval historian who has not written a biography of Nelson runs the risk of ridicule among his friends. And

Admiral Sir William James can plead a better excuse than some. Unlike the many landsmen who have essayed the task, he has held high command and known the sort of responsibilities which Nelson knew. With the background of one whose flag has been flown in the *Victory*, Admiral James is better placed than most to pay a tribute to the greatest of his naval predecessors. A tribute it is, rather than a great addition to Nelsonian literature. As a tribute, it is generous, understanding and well-expressed, and should be enjoyed by many.

As the author of *The British Navies in the Second World War* (published in 1946), Admiral James has already given us a first-hand account of recent hostilities at sea from the British angle. Complementary to this book, and to that of Captain Puleston of the U.S. Navy, is Mr. Martienssen's work. His title is well chosen, for he goes beyond German naval operations to show that Raeder and Doenitz had a general influence on strategy and that the latter's short-lived succession as Fuehrer was a not wholly unnatural consequence of the position that Admiral had finally achieved. "This story of Hitler, Raeder, and Doenitz is thus not only the story of the German Navy," writes the author, "but also the story of the inner war councils of Nazi Germany."

It is, nevertheless, the naval story that is the more complete. For a full understanding of the Nazi higher strategy would imply a full understanding of Hitler himself, as well as of Goering, Keitel, Jodl, Doenitz and Brauchitsch. On the strategy of the German Navy in 1939-1945, by contrast, Mr. Martienssen has come nearer to uttering the last word as well as the first. Using the background knowledge gained as editor of *Fuehrer Conferences on Naval Affairs*, and having access to the captured files of the German Admiralty, all neatly arranged and preserved by the Germans themselves, he has been able to write a full and authentic account of enemy naval strategy within three years of the war's conclusion. As no comparable account on the Allied side may be possible for years to come, his book will long remain in a class by itself. But if his opportunity has been unique, he has certainly not wasted it. Half-Danish by birth, the author has seen service as an R.N.V.R. officer in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Pacific, serving subsequently as Press Officer at the Admiralty. Well versed, therefore, in naval warfare, and now a journalist by profession, he is well qualified in every way to write such a book as this. It is admirably written and planned, fully documented and well illustrated with plates, maps and tables.

"I am convinced," the author writes, "that the historian, provided his sources are sufficiently complete, cannot be too close to his history. . . . Half a century later much of the atmosphere and many of the factors that influenced

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men will have been forgotten." The truth in this must not blind us to the fact that the history of the war at sea, considered as a whole, has still to be written and may take as many as fifty years to write. Here is the point of view of Raeder and Doenitz—still liable to be corrected or amplified by a hundred living witnesses who may have worked with them.

C. NORTHCOTE PARKINSON.

HENRY VIII AND THE REFORMATION, by H. Maynard Smith. *Macmillan.* 30*s.*

Henry VIII was not alone in finding it as important to satisfy his conscience as his desires. The endless self-justification that goes on privately in so many human heads, the reconciliation of high ideals with shabby practice, had in his case to be played out in public. It was necessary to prove to the people that the king acted well. The shifts by which he brought about his divorce from Katherine and precipitated the break with Rome have a peculiar odiousness. But his age was not ours, and even now few men have to justify their intimate actions in public.

Dr. Maynard Smith's solid and rewarding study of Henry VIII's reformation illustrates most admirably how great historical events can spring from insignificant causes. As Sir Maurice Powicke said at the beginning of his interesting lectures on *The Reformation in England*: "The one definite thing which can be said about the Reformation in England is that it was an act of State." And the act of State began with a king's taste in women. It was able to continue not because the old religion was in a state of grave scandal in this country but because it had become the lifeless background to everyday life. There was little sanctity and little learning in the Church in England. Men liked to practise religion according to the old forms, which Henry himself had no wish to disturb, but the forms had become empty. Sir Thomas More and John Fisher were ineffectual martyrs because ordinary men entirely failed to understand what they were dying for. That the parliamentary laws by which Henry made himself an English pope were at variance, as More urged, with the law of Christ's Universal Catholic Church was a point which the majority in England were totally unable to appreciate.

Dr. Maynard Smith's book holds the attention excellently. It is fair, even to Henry himself, and its narrative of the political reformation is as clear and pointed as its treatment of the movements in doctrine. The general reader of history will value its penetrating inquiry into the motives of the chief actors.

The Reformation is a period when the mixed character of man shows itself in all its aspects. There are the few good and great men on either side, and the many who are weak; there are those who rush to enrich families when shrines are despoiled; there are time-servers, ruffians, libertines, and the betrayers of friends; there is that dark group, always in the shadow of any revolution, out of which will be found men willing, acting under superior orders, to put even women to the torture of the rack. Odd facts come to light in such a chronicle. Dr. Maynard Smith often has reason, as others have had before him, to expose the partisanship and historical falsifications of Foxe's famous *Book of Martyrs*. English protestantism and nonconformity were greatly shaped by the passion of this book. Yet little of it was history and much propaganda. There can be hardly a nation without its books of this kind and *Mein Kampf* is a merely short-lived example. To see the part sheer untruth can play in the formation of national character is one of the shocks of history.

WALTER JAMES.

ON HUMAN FREEDOM, by John Laird. *Allen & Unwin.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Forward Lectures comprising this book proved to be Professor Laird's last word on a problem the crux of which—freedom of choice—he

had " puzzled over for many years." The clarification of the issue here is as useful as it is admirable. The main point could hardly be stated better :

> Indeterminists say that if choice were predetermined *ad unum* it would not be choice at all. It would be inevitable, not optional. They might be prepared to concede to their opponents that *if* we chose to perform we would perform and that *if* we chose to forbear we would forbear. . . . What they would deny is that an inevitable choice is, properly speaking, a choice at all.

Professor Laird described himself as " an undogmatic determinist " and emphasized the qualifying adjective. His view of the relation of determinism to both morals and choice is stated thus:

> The gist of my argument has been that, with one possible reservation, there is no opposition between voluntaristic determinism and personal moral responsibility. . . . What is more, there are strong positive grounds favouring, undogmatically, a form of voluntaristic ethics. The possible reservation is based on the problem whether voluntaristic determinism which implies pre-determination *ad unum* does, in the end, make nonsense of choice. That problem is intricate and I have not discerned a solution.

His appraisal of the evidence for freedom of choice furnished by introspective experience seems to me to be one of the least satisfactory parts of his study of the problem. The approach to the argument from experience is unsympathetic and the substance of his criticism, based upon an analysis in which the ostensibly direct testimony of consciousness to one's power to have chosen differently in precisely the same circumstances is reduced to the level of " precarious inference ", strikes one as being itself a rather precarious inference from what may indicate the insensitiveness of the analytical instrument rather than the non-existence of the vital knowledge.

Dr. Johnson's celebrated dictum that: " All theory is against freedom of the will ; all experience for it," may be dismissed as philosophically valueless, but substantially the same conclusion has been acquiesced in by not a few of his superiors in dialectics. Professor Laird refers to Professor Campbell of Glasgow on this matter, and others, of the calibre of Sidgwick and Professor Broad to mention only two, could be cited.

In dealing with a matter of special concern to a Forward lecturer, namely the relation of theism to his subject, Professor Laird seems generally rather less at home and his touch not so sure. The notoriously difficult problem of the bearing of divine pre-determination on human action is dealt with on the basis of the conclusion already reached that unless pre-determination as such makes nonsense of human choice there is no inconsistency between voluntaristic determinism and full moral responsibility.

> That holds for the theistic pre-determination of human action, just as it holds for any other pre-determination which does not palpably distort the facts. There is no separate problem to be investigated.

On p. 151, line 12, the term ' omnificence ' seems to have crept in for ' omniscience '.

PETER STUBBS.

ALL THE CONFERENCES ARE FAILURES. THIS IS INEVITABLE FOR HOLY SCRIPTURE DECLARES THEIR FUTILITY IN THESE WORDS:—

" Associate yourselves, O ye people and ye shall be broken in pieces. '

" Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand."

"LET GOD BE YOUR FEAR, AND LET GOD BE YOUR DREAD." (Isaiah viii.)

" And it shall come to pass, that WHOSOEVER shall CALL on the name of the LORD shall be delivered." (Joel ii. 32)

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KINGDOM OF ADVENTURE, EVEREST, by James Ramsey Ullman. *Collins.* 21*s.*

ALPINE TRAGEDY, by Charles Gos. *Allen & Unwin.* 18*s.*

The conquest of Everest has appealed to many mountaineers, although under winter conditions, which at high Himalayan altitudes prevail until May, the mountain is wholly unapproachable because of wind, cold and storm; and in summer the warm, wet monsoon, blowing up from the south, turns it into a death-trap of crumbling ice-walls and thundering avalanches. Thus only two brief seasons remain during which Everest is even theoretically climbable—the late spring and early fall. Moreover even in those periods the heights are guarded by blizzard and avalanche, with seldom more than two or three consecutive days of practicable climbing weather.

In this exciting book Mr. Ullman, himself an experienced mountaineer, has given us a number of accounts written by Everest adventurers.

What can be more charming (to read about) than the words of Lt.-Col. C. K. Howard-Bury who in the early 1900's took part in an expedition: "Leeches abounded here, sitting up at the end of every leaf and fern and waving at the passers-by." He tells us that information on any subject was always hard to get in Tibet, where most of the people knew nothing beyond their own village and they would have no real measure of distance or time.

One of the Everesters is Captain George Finch, a research chemist by profession, who with Geoffrey Bruce, using oxygen, climbed in 1922 to the then record height of 27,200 feet. Putting on their boots in the high camp was, he says, a struggle. "Mine I had taken to bed with me, and a quarter of an hour's striving and tugging sufficed to get them on. But Bruce's and Tejbir's were frozen solid, and it took them more than an hour to mould them into shape by holding them over lighted candles."

Subsequently men have flown in planes over Everest. "I was proud of the loud American engine," writes an American flier, Col. Robert L. Scott, Jr., "that was pulling me on and on to the top of the world." In that Himalayan magnificence "I perceived the insignificance of man." But as man had perfected that steadily purring engine, "perhaps he deserved a little credit too." The contributions of Mallory to this book are as outstanding as he is himself among the gallant band of Everesters. In his late thirties his climbing abilities were at their very peak and he became, both physically and psychologically, the driving spirit of three expeditions.

In *Alpine Tragedy* we are told of a long series of falls, this book, like that of Everest, being illustrated by the most splendid photographs, which give some idea of the risks run by these indomitable men. Perhaps this Alpine book should not be studied too closely by would-be mountaineers; when the famous Swiss guide, Emile Rey, had fallen to his death the leading guide of a Dutch party which arrived on the scene begged that no word of the accident should be revealed to his caravan, upon whose nerves it would have a terrible effect.

When Queen Victoria's Private Secretary wrote to Gladstone, saying that H.M. wonders if he thought she could do anything to mark her disapproval of dangerous Alpine excursions, the G.O.M. replied that mountain climbing was, in his opinion, not more destructive than other pursuits in the way of recreation "which perhaps have no justification to plead that is so respectable."

Here we have heroism galore, for instance that of Ulrich Almer on the Obergabelhorn in 1880, when a cornice collapsed, dragging Almer's party with it into the abyss. Without losing his head Almer leapt backwards, fixed his ice-axe in the snow, held it there with all his strength and thus saved his three comrades who were suspended above a precipice roughly 2,000 feet deep.

HENRY BAERLEIN.

THE LIFE OF SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, by John Dickson Carr. *John Murray.* 18*s.*

Conan Doyle did many things, and did them well. In his first match at Lord's he scored a century, his batting average in his last season in first-class cricket was 32, and he once took the wicket of W. G. Grace. He played "rugger" for Edinburgh University, and when in medical practice at Southsea he kept goal for the Portsmouth "soccer" team and was invited to play for the county. He was a fine boxer and billiard player, had a single-figure golf handicap, and was the first to introduce ski-ing into Switzerland. He was prominent in many important walks of public life, and achieved outstanding distinction in various branches of literature. And he created one of the most famous characters in world fiction. His books show no sign of diminishing popularity. No writer since Dickens has kept so firm a hold upon so wide a public.

"*Pour faire quelque chose de grand,*" wrote Saint-Simon, "*il faut être passionné.*" Conan Doyle threw himself into his varied activities with a passionate zest that carried him well on the way to success. He was in love with life; to him it was a joyous adventure. Yet he was keenly sensitive to the evils that beset mankind, especially to injustice, cruelty, and stupidity in high places. Time after time his energy and trenchant pen were devoted to redressing wrongs and promoting national interests.

He is most widely known as the creator of Sherlock Holmes, a character which in the universality of its appeal ranks with Don Quixote and the most famous characters of Shakespeare and Dickens. He did not think highly of his Holmes tales, and considered his books on the period of Edward III, *The White Company* and *Sir Nigel*, his finest literary achievements. "I believe," he wrote, "that if I had never touched Holmes, who has tended to obscure my higher work, my position in literature would be a more commanding one." His historical romances, however, are still widely read, and in popularity hold their own with the best. But not even the united genius of Scott and Dumas could ever compete with Holmes for popular favour.

This biographer shows that the creator of Holmes was also his original. The detective element in Conan Doyle's character appeared in the two celebrated cases in which he secured the release of two men "convicted" of crimes they had never committed. And in other cases, not made public, he employed the Holmes technique with striking effect.

Mr. Dickson Carr has long had a high reputation as a story teller, and in this biography, making skilful use of a vast collection of family papers, he has told a true story of enthralling interest, with a real hero—the life story of a gifted, dynamic, and valiant man.

G. F. MCLEARY.

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BOOKS ON THE TABLE

Equipped with boundless industry, observant eye and unquenched curiosity Compton Mackenzie has raised his sight-seeing to the level of a fine art. He was asked by the Indian Government to make a tour of its battlefields from Tunis to Hong Kong and to write a history of India's contribution to victory in the 1939-1945 war. Meanwhile, he publishes the thick diary, ALL OVER THE PLACE (*Chatto & Windus.* 18*s.*) with maps and over 60 photographs, which will be the blue-print of his later book. Incapable of boredom, he is in no danger of boring others with this record of a 50,000 mile journey by sea, air, road and rail, to places whose recited names make a chime of bells to eager and envious ears. He reminds himself at intervals of the passage of time but, looking along the shelf at the number of his books and their size and diversity, his reader can only adduce that they are a large part of his recipe for keeping young.

From Blackfellow to Viking

A flying leap from China across the Philippine Islands and Netherlands East Indies to THE SUNLIT LAND (*Cassell.* 16*s.*) of Queensland. Another author of wide interests, Charles Barrett is primarily a naturalist and his wanderings, in a fabulous world of cassowary, ant hill, frilled dragon, coral reef, giant moth and pawpaw, make an attractive and a decorative contribution to a book that is rich in contacts with bipeds, white and aboriginal, too.——Now a leap of continental dimensions for the reading of THE SCANDINAVIANS IN HISTORY by S. M. Toyne (*Edward Arnold.* 18*s.*). As Dr. G. M. Trevelyan says in his Foreword, Englishmen are aware of their kinship with Dane and Norseman, and of " the fundamental similarity of political development in Scandinavia and England." The passing of Canute has dimmed the connection but recent exchanges between Norway and Russia bring it sharply into view, and this book plays a useful part in tracing the long story from the Vikings to the troubles of Finland in 1946, pointing the democratic way for 1949.

So many gods

William Howells in THE HEATHENS (*Victor Gollancz.* 18*s.*) travels the winding road of the religions of primitive man. With a style that is more Menckenian than that of most learned Americans, the Associate Professor of Anthropology in the University of Wisconsin has much to say of diverse people's often curiously similar beliefs. Profound research entitles him to criticism of some of the tenets of Freud and Frazer, and forthrightly—even testily—he assesses the place of magic, medicine, ghosts, demons, gods, tabu, totemism and death, before considering why " Church attendance has been getting more ragged and less meaningful." Room for this book will be excavated on the shelf alongside *The Golden Bough*, than which this reader can bestow no higher distinction.——One of the turns in the road discloses the Celtic Church, represented by saints like Martin, Patrick, David, Columba and Brigid, which spread its roots throughout most of Europe. In THEY BUILT ON ROCK (*The Celtic Art Society, Maxwell Street, Glasgow, C.I.* 15*s.*), Diana Leatham traces its 700 years' history before it was almost destroyed by the Danes. This account brightly reflects the little lamps that were lit in the dark ages when, for example, Alfred the Great was able to convert the Vikings to Christianity, a triumph which the author proudly ascribes to the Catholic Church's Celtic branch.

Faith and works

One whose teaching " included the duality of spiritual grace and scientific knowledge " is introduced by Samuel J. Looker, the editor, in NATURE AND OTHER ESSAYS by J. L. Tayler (*J. W. Sparks, The Printing House, London, E.7.* 2*s.* 6*d.*). Christian, naturalist, lecturer in biology and sociology, this

was a medical man of untarnished idealism whose guide to the wisdom of life is suggestive and constructive reading.——THE CHALLENGE OF OUR TIME (*Percival Marshall.* 7*s.* 6*d.*) is the natural successor ; churchmen, scientists, philosophers, historians and creative artists contributed to the broadcast series which now gives a title to the book. Grace Wyndham-Goldie, the producer of the talks, believes the wideness of the response to them was due " to the personal approach and undoubted sincerity of the speakers," all of whom are at least united in seeing the necessity for closing the gap between science and the humanities.

La liberté

Another symposium that has its spiritual implications too is THE OPENING OF AN ERA : 1848, edited by François Fejtö with an Introduction by A. J. P. Taylor (*Allan Wingate.* 21*s.*). The writers are concerned each with his own national revolution, which yet fits into the political upheaval of Europe as a whole, with its repercussions on America and Russia. The democratic victory in the Swiss civil war of 1847 is cited as the model of what revolutionary movements should be :—" What Switzerland has become represents what the revolutionaries hoped to achieve "—even although it was France who was then exhibiting the fashionable pattern ; now of course she symbolizes the failures of all the other revolutions to bring about that liberty of spirit which was their aim. This viewing of Europe with an eagle's eye seems to be the rational way of teaching history and, more important, of learning the lessons that history teaches. The book is therefore urged for serious study ; dippers will miss its essential quality.——Dipping into TWENTY SHILLINGS IN THE POUND by W. Macqueen-Pope (*Hutchinson.* 21*s.*) can do little harm to the reader, or to its author. He gives it a nostalgic sub-title : " A Lost Age of Plenty : 1890-1914 " and those who remember all or part of the period will find treasure on any chance page. The young will probably read it through at a sitting much as earlier they might have devoured a fairy tale. Mr. Macqueen-Pope is blessed with a retentive mind, which the corroboration of much unobtrustive research has made invincible. Together with numerous illustrations he stimulates delighted recognition of half-submerged memories and, though his style is crisp enough, he induces spells of reverie. It is perhaps ungracious to interpolate that for very many this was not the golden age, because the author is writing of the middle classes for whom £500 a year was indeed comfort, with affluence for only double the price. Nevertheless, the tendency to yearn vicariously for the Edwardian era should now be curbed.

Which road ?

So far from thinking the present is the golden age, Derek Walker-Smith, M.P., in COMING THIS WAY ? (*Sampson Low.* 7*s.* 6*d.*) opens his case with a bald : " We live in the Age of Politics." His book is a warning against the dangers of Communism and uses the example of Socialism in our time (that is, in Britain) to reinforce the argument. The ideal for him is " good planning at the right level " and in industry, " co-partnership ; profit-sharing ; consultation ; confidence ; the career open to talents." A borrowed steering wheel is useful, if it fits. It does not fit the Conservative machine, benevolent—with only occasional whip cracks—though it now would be. This is not to say that Socialists might not profitably reflect on the book's real case against the perils of out of hand bureaucracy.

Talent and taste

Now, when Mr. Winston Churchill is not heading with a victorious Party for the Utopia that the Socialists so absentmindedly overlooked, left, right and centre are free to indulge their inclination to love him equally. His little book PAINTING AS A PASTIME (*Odhams Press.* 10*s.* 6*d.*) will have no political detractors either (though

businesslike Tories might see fit to grumble at the price of an essay extracted from a book published in 1932). But they will be glad to have such excellent reproductions of 18 of Mr. Churchill's paintings as well. Those who have dared to dabble only in water colours will be encouraged by some very practical advice on the use of oils from the author, who quotes triumphantly :

La peinture à l'huile
Est bien difficile,
Mais c'est beaucoup plus beau
Que la peinture à l'eau.

He also demonstrates that to have a preconceived interest in pictures is not necessarily a blessing : from which one may draw half hope and half despair.—— As relatively few will build houses or make furniture and pottery, the possession of taste in these media can be counted wholly advantageous. And no bad way to start forming it is to study " The Things We See " *Penguin* series (*2s. 6d. each*). There are HOUSES by Lionel Brett, FURNITURE by Gordon Russell and POTTERY AND GLASS by Bernard Hollowood. The copious illustrations are indispensable for the rejection of the incongruous, the inharmonious, in favour of the shapely and the functional. Moreover, much light is thrown on why the instinct against a design is so often right ; in other words, analysis of the reason here confirms or disproves the judgment.——All this may be said of AN UNDERSTANDING OF ARCHITECTURE by Robert Lutyens and Harold Greenwood (*James Barrie : People's University Press.* 6*s.* 6*d.*), and in the discussion of such themes as architecture and history, style and epoch, accompanied by sufficiently simple drawings, doors are opened into a wider culture.

Sticks and stones

One branch of the subject, " Composition and Tradition " (presumably a series edited by John Piper), is studied in detail in AN ENGLISH FARMHOUSE by Geoffrey Grigson, with 30 plates in colour from photographs by Percy Hennell (*Max Parrish.* 21*s.*). The book is produced with lavish care and presents a complete and satisfying picture of the physical and social development of a farm and its neighbourhood. The author regards the making of such a house as vernacular architecture, " the simple expression of the human need." Its stones, timbers and thatch are gradually built up in the reader's mind ; it is a symbol of something more than a civilization.

Three morals

The story that began in a stable is retold in terms of the times by Clive Sansom in his play THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN (*Frederick Muller.* 5*s.*). Science and religion are the husband and wife, truth, wisdom and imagination are the three kings, health, humanity and endurance the shepherds, and guests at the inn are trade, nationalism and lust, with false science and religion to confuse and dismay. A morality with a punch or, more aptly, with a hard kick.—— THE GLASS MENAGERIE described as a " memory play " by the author, Tennessee Williams (*John Lehmann.* 7*s.* 6*d.*), uses the overpowering mother theme, with the collection of little glass animals as the symbol of her drifting, futile daughter's frustration. Those who saw it staged in London recently, will be glad to have its implications thrust home through the written word. A further reason for reading the book is the author's Introduction, "The Catastrophe of Success ", to him a *dénouement* as complete as poor Laura's in the play.——Another catastrophic success is the theme of Peter Yates' THE BURNING MASK (*Chatto & Windus.* 6*s.*). Edmund Kean, " The sun's bright child " of Byron's description, is indeed, as the jacket says, a magnificent subject for the dramatist. His generosity, arrogance, his Drury Lane triumphs—up to that last one when he defied the pit there—and his sordid end, come over remarkably well from the pages of a poet's play, and lead to speculation on its chances of being presented in the theatre.

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